

Latin American Protestantism From the Neglected Continent to the
Continent of Opportunity: An Assessment of the Justification for
Protestant Expansion in Latin America, 1894-1960.

Arturo Piedra Solano

A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Theology of the University
of Edinburgh in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy.

1993



I certify that the material contained within this dissertation is my own composition, and that the contents reflect the results of my own research, except where explicitly stated otherwise.

Acknowledgments to:

The Basel Mission, The Presbyterian Church of the United States, The Seminario Biblico Latinoamericano, The Hope Trust, and The Church of Scotland for without their financial and material support it would have had been impossible for me to undertake this enterprise.

New College of the University of Edinburgh, especially the Department of Ecclesiastical History, which provided the academic environment that made me enjoy every moment of my study. In addition, they, together with the Basel Mission, provided the finance for me to carry out research in various archives in Great Britain and the United States.

My supervisor, Professor Dr. Stewart J. Brown for the trust and sympathy that he all along showed for the subject of the dissertation and especially for my approach. Also for the many suggested alterations made through his careful revision of the work.

Dr. Andrew Ross who was always available when I needed his advice.

Rev. Gordon Morris MA BD, whose experience as a missionary in Zambia and Argentina continually challenged my approach. The initial reading of the draft chapters by Mr. Morris became a vital factor for the successful conclusion of this work. I am also grateful to Mr. Morris and his wife, Sheila, for becoming truly part of my family here in Edinburgh.

Professor Marcela Hoesl, Dr. John Munro, Rev. Stanley Boot who also read some of the drafts of various chapters.

To the Library of Union Seminary, New York, the Library of Congress in Washington, the Archive of the British Bible Society in the University of Cambridge, and The British Museum. Union Seminary and the Library of Congress provided most of primary sources on the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America and the papers of Dr. Samuel Guy Inman.

The staff of New College who were always ready to help me in the search for sources.

Dr. William G. Naphy, Manuscript Assistant, New College Library, for the help given in locating important letters of J.H. Oldham on the question of Latin America in the Edinburgh Conference of 1910.

To Eli my wife, and our children, Arturo, Nahima, and Yamilceh for all their patience and help.

A Eli for so much...

Abbreviations:

SAMS	South American Missionary Society
SAMS	South American Missionary Society Magazine
RBMU	Regions Beyond Missionary Union
ABS	American Bible Society
BFBS	British and Foreign Bible Society
EUSA	Evangelical Union of South America
VOPSA	Voice of Pity for South America
LND	La Nueva Democracia
CCLA	Committee of Cooperation in Latin America
TMRW	The Missionary Review of the World
CAM	Central American Mission
CAB	Central American Bulletin
MIGPMCA	Microfilms on Guatemala Presbyterian Mission and Church Archive
MINCP	Microfilms on Iglesia Nacional Presbiteriana de Guatemala

Table of Contents

VOLUME I

Page No.
i

General Introduction

Chapter I:

In search of support for protestant evangelisation of Latin America
(The Neglected Continent)

Introduction

1.	Latin America as a "the neglected continent"	2
2.	The Roman Catholic Church as a missions field	5
3.	Spain as land of mission	12
4.	Latin America in the missionary conferences	22
5.	The Shadow of the Monroe Doctrine	30
6.	Breaking the wall	39
7.	Evangelisation as an asset for colonial expansion	46
8.	Importance of evangelisation for commerce	60
9.	Christianity and civilisation	69
10.	Evangelisation helps to subdue aborigines	79

Conclusion

Chapter II

Latin America as a Mission Field for Protestant Evangelization
(The Continent of Opportunity)

Introduction

1.	Indictment of the official religion	
1.1.	Failure of the Roman Catholic Church	89
1.2.	The Roman Catholic Church is no longer a power	93
1.3.	The Roman Catholic faith has been contaminated	95
1.4.	View on Latin Americans as pagans	97
1.5.	Propagation of Protestantism as self-defence	105
2.	Latin America needs Protestantism	
2.1.	Protestantism can fill the vacuum	107
2.2.	Latin America is heading towards a Reformation	110
2.3.	The Roman Catholic Church needs Protestantism	114
3.	Protestantism and Capitalism	
3.1.	Protestantism and neocolonialism	118
3.2.	Protestants realise the opportunity	122

3.3.	Religious influence must match commercial influence	128
3.4.	Protestant use of military metaphors	130
3.5.	View on the Panama Canal	138
3.6.	Protestants and World War I	143
4.	The natural richness of Latin America as an asset	
4.1.	Description of Latin America as a rich land	152
4.2.	Interdependence on Raw Materials	157
4.3.	The Christianising of commerce	160
4.4.	Dangers of financial betterment.	163

Conclusion

Chapter III

The Panama Congress as the Start of a Great Protestant Movement (Latin America no Longer Neglected)

Introduction

1.	En Route to the Panama Congress	174
2.	First actions of the CCLA	177
3.	Impact of the Congress	192
4.	Theological emphasis of speeches	199
	4.1. Reassuring the delegates	
	4.2. Power of prayer	
	4.3. Social pragmatism	
	4.4. The role of the Bible	
	4.5. The question of women	
	4.6. Jesus: The centre	
	4.7. The triumph of Christianity	
	4.8. God and Unity	
5.	Latin American speakers at Panama	221
6.	Opposition to the Congress	227
7.	Misgivings in Latin America	229
8.	John Fox's criticism	234

Conclusion

Chapter IV

The World Missionary Conference and Protestantism in Latin America (Latin America: The Apple of Discord)

Introduction

1.	J.H Oldham and J.R. Mott	248
----	--------------------------	-----

2.	J. R. Mott and Latin America	252
2.1.	Mott's earlier interest	
2.2.	Help of Neocolonialism	
2.3.	View on the Panama Congress	
3.	Latin America: The Apple of Discord	261
4.	Latin America at the Conference	283
5.	Putting a good face on it.	287
6.	Previous work on missionary statistics	289
7.	Exclusion of Latin America causes upsets	291
8.	Latin America in the International Review of Missions	295
9.	Paralysis of the Committee of Continuation	298
10.	Panama Congress as part of the Edinburgh Conference	300
11.	The desire for a "science" of missions	305
12.	Panama Congress was "Scientific"	307
13.	Panama Congress better than Edinburgh	310

Conclusion

VOLUME II

Chapter V

Protestantism and Society in Latin America (The Option for the Middle Classes)

1.	Why to attempt to win higher classes	316
2.	The need for a middle class	321
3.	Things that did not appeal to educated people	325
4.	Step towards reaching the educated classes	329
5.	The poor as an obstacle	343
6.	Protestantism as a progressive religion	352
7.	Perspective on Aborigines	372
7.1.	Translation work is advocated and opposed	376
7.2.	Obstacles to the work among Indians	380
7.3.	Indian work as a failure	397
7.4.	Outlook on Indian suffering	403

Chapter VI

A Liberal theology for a Prospective Liberal Constituency (Contextualising the Message)

Introduction

1.	Avoiding theological controversy	413
2.	Grounds for dislike of dogmatic Christianity	418
3.	Jesus is better and is above theology	427
4.	CCLA in line with modern thought	434
	4.1. New Perspective on the Bible	
	4.2. The Bible as important but not sufficient	
5.	The hold of modern ideas in Latin America	449
6.	Response to Biblical criticism in Latin America	452
7.	The Christianity that Latin America needs	457
8.	The Social Gospel as an answer to Latin American needs	461
	3.8.1. Facing up to the Protestant heritage	
	3.8.2. Importance of theological education	
	3.8.3. Social Gospel is more than charity	
9.	The Uniqueness of Christianity	473

Conclusion

Chapter VII

The entanglement of Protestantism with Panamerican Movement (Latin American distrust of Protestantism)

Introduction

1.	Earlier distrust of Protestantism	491
	1.2. Protestants as filibusters	
	1.2. Missions linked to foreign companies	
	1.3. Missions supported US military actions	
2.	The Panama Congress and Panamericanism	499
	2.1. Internationalism or Imperialism	
	2.2. A religious dimension is needed	
3.	Latin American dislike of Panamericanism	511
	3.1. Lead to Panamericanism	
	3.2. Equated to Monroe Doctrine	
	3.3. Haya de La Torre opposes Panamericanism	
4.	Protestants promote Panamericanism	519
	4.1. Panamericanism is a fact.	
	4.2. CCLA born to promote it	
5.	Seeking consensus against Latin American unity	527
	5.1. Some support for Panamericanism	
	5.2. Protestants fear Latin American unity	
	5.3. In America: North and South- is the salvation	
6.	Distortion of history	538
	6.1. Sanitising North American actions	
	6.2. Not only US is imperialistic.	
	6.3. US imperialism is a myth	

6.4. Panamericanism but not under yankee hegemony	
7. Protestant awareness of Latin American distrust	552
8. Samuel Guy Inman and US interests	562
8.1. Progressive image	
8.2. Apparently critical of US	
8.3. Desire to be close to the State Department	
8.4. Role as an informer	
 General Conclusion	 i
 Endnotes	 587
Bibliography	647

General Introduction:

The official commemorations of Quincentenary and the arrival of Spanish civilization (1492-1992), or the celebration by Indians of 500 years of suffering and resistance, has fostered a great deal of interest in the study of Christianity in Latin America. The Indian communities interpreted the involvement of the Roman Catholic Church in these celebrations as not only showing a lack of sympathy for the suffering of their forbears, but also as an implicit acceptance of the Spanish Conquest as something good. Their complaint is clear: they had nothing to celebrate in what they see as the genocide of their cultures and martyrdom of their forbears. They demanded that Christian Churches should mark this anniversary by acts of repentance and forgiveness for the blessing they had given to the Spanish Conquest.

Although this resentment was focused on the Roman Catholic Church, the contribution of Protestant churches in Latin America was also brought into question. Protestant criticism of the involvement of the Roman Catholic Church in the conquest and oppression of the Indians cannot overlook the fact that Protestants later repeated essentially the same vices that the Roman Catholic Church had during the colonial period. This is why the acts of repentance that Indian communities are demanding also apply to Protestant Churches.

Studies on the arrival of Protestantism in Latin America in the

nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth century provide evidence that old criticisms by Protestant missionaries of the behaviour of Spanish colonialists did not prevent Protestants from participating in the neocolonial project in Latin America, which was as cruel, and perhaps more cruel, than that of Spain. Such studies reveal that the "pilgrims" in Latin America were not essentially different from the priests that accompanied the conquistadors. The road towards modernisation which independence opened in 1821 and the coming to power of the liberal governments added to the legacy of suffering that the Spanish Conquest had brought to the region.

This present research should be seen as a contribution to the history of Protestantism in Latin America in the framework of the questions raised by the celebrations of the 500th anniversary. It is an indictment of old Protestant missionary societies which thought to fill the vacuum that, according to them, the failure of Roman Catholic Church had brought about in Latin America. We say indictment of "old" because we are aware that present leaders of most of the churches to which we refer have also become critics of their predecessors' attitudes. This is certainly the case of Methodists, Presbyterians, Northern Baptists, and some others, including the South American Missionary Society in Great Britain.

However there are still many organisations, especially independent missions or "faith missions", who have not come to terms with their past. It is interesting how some of these "faith

missions" that were part of the movement towards Latin American evangelisation in the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, with origins both in Great Britain and the United States, have given their records a strange character of secrecy, to which only their own members have access. Latin Americans are not able to read how these Protestant missions understood their cultures. The danger of the possibility of "misuse" that is argued to keep the secrecy of the records, is often nothing more than the fear of other histories than their own "official history" of their activities in Latin America. "Misuse" of the records often means supporting non- Western points of view regarding the contributions of these. This explains why most of the historic works on these missions are written by non-Latin Americans, and more especially by people whom the mission leaders could trust that their approach would not contradict the ideas of their founders. These mission leaders too often will not allow that the people of the mission field should have the right to pass judgement on their activities, as missionaries does with these people's cultures. "Official" histories of the Protestant missions in Latin America have omitted the fact that the development of Christianity in the third world, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, had a dynamic closely related to social events. They lose sight of the fact that the expansion of Christianity in Latin America succeeded largely through the assistance of political and military force. These histories say little about the influence that social events had on their activities, or the influence that the expansion of

Christianity had on social conditions in Latin American communities. These works are interested mainly in featuring the success of missions in terms of conversions and the development of congregations.

This thesis describes the ethos of a Protestantism that was challenged by the emergence of the Liberation Theology and especially by the emergence of a strong and dynamic Pentecostal movement after the 1960s. We pay special attention to the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America(CCLA) as the main force that convinced North American Protestant missionary societies to consider Latin America as a mission field, on the same footing as Asia and Africa. Although we consider Protestant work in Latin America early in the nineteenth century, it is not until the emergence of the CCLA,(1914), and especially after the Panama Congress(1916), that North Americans decided to support openly Protestant expansion in Latin America. In the first two chapters we analyze what led to this change of attitude of North American protestant missions towards Latin America.

We deal with these two eras in the first two chapters. In the first, "In search for support for Protestant evangelisation in Latin America(The Neglected Continent)", we show how British individuals worked hard to convince British missionary societies to include Latin America within the purview of their activities, and what led to their failure in this aim. Latin America as "The Neglected Continent" was an expression first coined by Protestant British individuals who later founded SAMS, RMBU, and EUSA. The booklet of Lucy Guinness and

E.C. Miller, The Neglected Continent (1894) was especially important in spreading this conception. This is why the period of this study commences from that date of this booklet.

These people believed that there were no good reasons for Protestant missions to confine their work only to Asia and Africa. The argument that the Roman Catholic Church had its sway in Latin America, in their view, could not prevent Protestant missions from working in Latin America. They claimed that the paganism of Eastern cultures that had mobilised Protestant Christians of the West was also present in Latin America. Yet they failed to convince British constituencies of the need to support Protestantism in Latin America. Two reasons seem to have influenced British Protestant missions against taking much interest in Latin America. First, the legacy of the principle "America for Americans" of the "Monroe Doctrine". Secondly, and more important, was the failure of the attempts of Protestant evangelisation in Spain. The reasoning was logical; if Protestant missions had proved unable to gain ground in Spain, the same would surely happen in Latin America.

Finally in this first chapter we show how the British and North American Protestants interested in Latin America argued for the importance of Protestantism in Latin America as an asset for the commercial and colonial objectives of Great Britain and the United States. SAMS maintained that their work in Patagonia, Paraguay, and Argentina would eventually advance the interests of British

landowners there. The Spanish American War provided a good reason for North American advocates of Protestantism in Latin America. John R. Mott and Robert Speer were convinced of the "manifest destiny" that the United States had with regard to Latin America. North American actions in Cuba, the larger Caribbean basin, and the Philippines were not only justified, but it was also believed that the success of these interventions could not be achieved without the expansion of Protestant religion in those places. Military intervention alone in Cuba was seen, for instance, as insufficient to elevate the low morality of Cubans. Puerto Rico was presented as an example of what a "good" colonialism, inspired by Christian principles, could do for the people's good.

In the second chapter, "Latin American as a Mission Field for Protestant Evangelisation: The Continent of Opportunity)", we explore North American views on the need for Latin America to be considered as a land for Protestant missionary work. The coming of the end of the "neglected" era, as far as the expansion of Protestantism was concerned is closely linked with the growth of interest which the United States developed in the region following the Spanish American War. The transition from the "neglected era" to what I call the "era of opportunity" is marked by the realisation on the part of the United States that the South of the hemisphere Continent must be brought under the influence and control of the North.

The Roman Catholic Church was portrayed as a failure in the

sense that it was unable fully to control and change the values of Indian cultures. According to Protestant missionaries, it had left a religious vacuum which only Protestantism was able to fill. Further, Protestant missionaries also saw an opportunity for religious renewal in the withdrawal of intellectuals and educated people from the Roman Catholic Church. The Reformation that had shaken the Roman Catholic Church in Europe in the sixteenth century was, in Protestant eyes, now coming to Latin America. Latin America was not only heading toward a religious reformation but also the Roman Catholic Church and Latin America people were needing representatives of the Protestant Reformation. Another central idea that we will develop in this chapter is the premise that the propagation of Protestantism in Latin America was necessary for the security of the United States. The United States Protestant missions had to change the morality of Latin Americans before Latin Americans corrupted the Christian values of North American society. This was argued in view of the continual migration from the South towards the North. The second idea is the acknowledgment on the part of North American Protestant missionary leaders that the United States had a new political outlook on Latin America. The outcome of the Spanish American War, the building of the Panama Canal, and the First World War helped to consolidate the position of the United States in the region. This was seen as an opportunity not only for commercial but for religious aims as well. In stimulating the investment of North

American capital, missionaries stressed the natural richness of Latin American countries.

The Congress of Panama was the clearest signal of the transition from the "neglected continent" to the "continent of opportunity" as far as Protestant expansion is concerned. We deal with this subject in the third chapter, "The Panama Congress as the Start of a Great Protestant Movement (Latin America no longer neglected)". In this section we describe the process that led to the formation of the CCLA and the organization of the Panama Congress. CCLA is the organization that managed to convince most North American Protestant Christians of the importance of Latin America as a land for Protestant work. We also describe the misgivings that the Panama Congress aroused in the United States as well as in Latin America. Finally we deal with the theological principles that were stressed in the Panama Congress as they were expressed in the main speeches. In the light of the Panama Congress that the reasons that had earlier led British and North Americans Protestants to neglect Latin America as a mission field become clearer. This is why, after having explored the Panama Congress, we break the chronological order in order to go back and view the connection that existed between the World Missionary Conference of Edinburgh in 1910 and its repercussions on Protestantism in Latin America. We deal with this subject in the fourth chapter, "The World Missionary Conference and Protestantism in Latin America: (Latin America:the Apple of Discord)". The central

argument here is that although Latin America had been excluded from the Edinburgh Conference's agenda, this Conference created the conditions that eventually speeded up the Protestant evangelisation of Latin America. The intention of North Americans to include Latin America within the Conference's purview almost prompted the failure of the event. Although representing two different schools of missionary work, J.H Oldham and J.R. Mott became the architects of the Edinburgh Conference. They found themselves at odds over the Latin American question. At the time of the Edinburgh Conference(1910), North American Protestant leaders had to come to terms with the idea that they might have to sacrifice their religious ambitions in Latin America in order preserve the ecumenical character that they wanted to give to the conference. English High Anglicans saw the inclusion of Latin America as possibly damaging to their links the Roman Catholic Church; and they threatened to withdraw unless North Americans dropped their intentions regarding Latin America. The bitterness of this experience was reflected in the Panama Congress where its organisers strove to show to what extent the Edinburgh Conference fell short and in what measure the Panama Congress surpassed it.

The organisers of the Panama Congress made every effort to incorporate the best virtues and features of the Edinburgh Conference in the Panama Congress. In this chapter we also see how the outbreak of the First World War paralysed the work of the Committee of

Continuation of the Edinburgh Conference, thus enabling John R. Mott to devote much of his time to the fostering of the CCLA and the Panama Congress.

The next chapter differs from those first four in that attention is centred on Protestant activity in Latin America. Protestant missions are no more concerned with the old claim that Protestantism was not welcome in Latin America because of the sway of the Roman Catholic Church there. The Panama Congress gave confidence to Protestant missionaries that their activities in Latin American countries were right and that people there wanted their work. This last section deals largely with the social perspective of Protestant missionaries in Latin America. It is made up of the fifth chapter, "Protestantism and Society in Latin America(The Option for the middle classes)", the sixth, " A Liberal theology for a prospective liberal constituency: (Contextualising the Message)", and finally the seventh chapter, "The entanglement of Protestantism with the Panamerican Movement:(Latin American distrust of Protestantism)". The fifth and sixth are closely connected in that both show how Protestantism centred its attention on the middle and educated classes in the belief that these people were already politically leading the countries. The fifth chapter deals with the views that Protestant missionaries had on their work among the middle and the poorer classes, and with the Indian communities. In trying to draw educated people into the Protestant ranks, missionaries were often contemptuous of the poor, even the poor who were already members

of the Evangelical churches. Protestant missionaries were not pleased with the fact that the poor were only the social class that Protestantism had been able to attract, and some even criticised the humble character of Protestant buildings. The sixth chapter shows how Protestants were ready to understand the religious needs of the class they wanted to win. Although the official reports of the evangelical congresses in Panama(1916), Montevideo(1925) and Havana(1929) left out any reference to the controversy that liberal theology had caused in the United States, there is every indication that the leaders of the CCLA felt identified with the liberal current. Their dislike of dogmatic Christianity and their fondness for the social gospel, were intended to address the ideological pragmatism of the Latin American educated sections. The seventh and final chapter shows how Latin Americans saw Protestantism as a religion too involved with the interests of the United States in the region. Protestant closeness with North American companies, and their refusal to criticise openly actions of the United States meant that Latin Americans often failed to distinguish between the military and religious interests of the United States in Latin America. Protestant missionaries showed a special interest in the new start of relations between the United States and Latin America signified by the Panamerican Movement, fostered by Washington. In promoting Panamericanism after 1916, Protestant missionaries contended that the United States had rejected its imperialist policies of the past. Furthermore in supporting Panamericanism, Protestant

missionaries dismissed the attempts of those leaders in Latin America, like Raul Haya de la Torre, who were leading movement towards Latin American unity, intended not only to solve the internal problems of the region, but also to confront the encroachments of the United States.

Chapter I

In search of support for Protestant Evangelisation of Latin America (The Neglected Continent)

Introduction

In this chapter we deal with the first stage of the arrival of Protestantism in Latin America, which covers the period from the first organised attempt to establish a Protestant mission in Patagonia in 1838 up to the Panama Congress in 1916. During this time Latin America was frequently referred to as "the neglected continent". This was because the large missionary societies did not show much interest in including this region in the areas of world Protestant expansion.

The main aim of the section is to explore the reasons why the Protestant leadership of the 19th century did not want to consider Latin America as a field for missionary work. The chapter also considers the efforts of people to prove that Latin America was a legitimate mission field for Protestant Missions. We underline two main factors: (1) points of view that could have encouraged the missionary societies to think of Latin America in the same way as they did Asia and Africa; and (2) the principal points made by those who tried to convince the Protestant missionary leadership to support missionary enterprise in Latin America.

The main hypothesis of the chapter is that once the people who advocated the Protestant evangelisation of Latin America realised that mere allegations of the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church were

insufficient to draw support to their cause, they drew attention to the financial advantages for the countries sending missionaries as well as for the newly emerged Liberal governments there. The chapter is based largely on the case study of the South American Missionary Society (hereafter SAMS) as the pioneer of the Protestantism in Latin America.

1.1 Latin America as a neglected continent

When one considers the extraordinary growth that the Protestant Church in Latin America has experienced since 1980 it is difficult to imagine that there was a time when the leadership of Protestant missions in United States and particularly in Europe believed that there was no chance that Protestant ideas could gain a foothold in Latin America. As a consequence of this feeling, the largest missionary societies not only ruled out their devoting significant financial and human resources to the evangelisation of the continent, but they also tried to discourage others from becoming involved in that task. Thus Latin America was practically excluded from the programme of Protestant missions in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Some British people began to talk of Latin America as "the neglected continent". For them this region had been left out of the missionary passion that characterised the churches during the past century. This phrase, "the neglected continent", was first coined by British church people who argued that Latin America, like Asia and

Africa, had the right to be affected by Missionary work. In 1900 the North American Methodist missionary, Thomas Wood mentioned that this phrase "the neglected continent" was used primarily amongst British Missionary writers as a distinctive expression of the spiritual abandonment of the region by the missionary movement.¹ While Latin America received different names to describe its religious condition vis a vis the Protestant expansion, the title which most caught people's attention was that of "the neglected continent". We first encounter the use of this expression by SAMS, which is regarded as the pioneer organisation of the Protestant evangelisation of Latin America. As early as 1868 Walter Kirby, editor of the South American Missionary Magazine, (hereafter SAMSM), referred to Latin America as "long neglected".² Other British Missionary societies which were concerned for the Protestant evangelisation of Latin America referred to Latin America as "the neglected continent". This was the case of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union (hereafter RBMU) founded in 1894, and the Evangelical Missionary Union of South America(hereafter EUSA) formed in 1911. The official magazine of EUSA bore "The Neglected Continent" as its title. John A Mackay, before leaving for Peru, as the first missionary of the Free Church of Scotland, wrote several articles on South America which were entitled as "the neglected continent".³

Lucy Guinnes of RBMU was one of the first commentators who in 1894 wrote directly on the need for the Protestant Evangelization of

Latin America, which she also called "the neglected continent". Her work, on one hand, manifests the anguish of those who had worked unsuccessfully for nearly half a century to have Latin America acknowledged as a mission field, but on the other hand, it shows the attempts to initiate a new process to persuade British Christians of the spiritual needs of Latin America.⁴ Kenneth Holmes referred to it as a piece of vivid and revealing writing which roused many Christians at home to realise the tremendous need that South America had to hear the pure Gospel.⁵ But despite the work of RBMU and EUSA British Protestants once more still did not show enough interest to give money to this cause. We can go further by saying that the British churches continued to misunderstand those who were highly interested in expanding Protestantism in Latin America. The same can be said of the North American churches, which to a large extent began to show more interest in this cause only after the Spanish American War(1898), and especially after World War I.

As with British Protestant Churches, there was the feeling that given the strong heritage of the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America, it was almost impossible for any Protestant missionary activity to succeed in those lands. Thus before becoming a little minority in the religious spectrum of that continent, the Protestant missionaries to Latin America had already been a minority in their own countries. That is why, at times, we find that "the neglected continent" symbolised also in the "neglected missionary force" which worked in these countries.

The consciousness of neglect of Latin America by the missionary movement, was a continuing complaint on the part of the small groups who believed in the cause.

2. The Roman Catholic Church as a mission field

The history of the relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Missions has been characterised in Latin America by confrontation. The former created repressive mechanisms to prevent the Protestants from gaining any foothold in these countries. And the latter based their mission on the argument that the Christianity of the Roman Catholic Church did not represent a true expression of the Bible. It was this argument that gave Missions the urge to carry out the first attempts at Protestant work in Latin America.

Indeed the small British missions interested in the evangelisation of Latin America, first considered that the best way of convincing the large Protestant missionary societies of the needs for Protestant work in Latin America was to stress and denounce the mistakes of the Roman Catholic Church . There was no other way to draw support from such a constituency that knew that Latin America had been affected by Christian presence since the 16th century. European people, generally speaking, never understood why they should spend resources on the expansion of Protestantism in Latin America. Those who were interested in making these countries a land of mission had to argue that the religion that had arrived with the

Spanish had little to do with real Christianity. This claim made little progress in convincing ordinary Christian people either in Great Britain or in other European countries who were involved in the expansion of Protestantism. In the whole period of the awakening of Protestant missions in the 19th century nobody was interested in creating a consistent movement toward the Protestant evangelisation of Latin America. Nevertheless for the purposes of this chapter, it is enough to sketch some views on the predominantly Roman Catholic land as a field for Protestant missions.

One of the proponents of the Protestant Mission to Latin America was the historian John C. Lowrie, a long time member of the Committee of the Presbyterian Church of the United States. He was in no doubt that the Orthodox and Catholic regions in Europe, as well as Catholic Latin America, must be looked upon as legitimate fields for mission. Lowrie refers to this by saying that "these people could not be exonerated from a purer faith".⁶ Lowrie asserted that "the Papal Church and also the Greek Church must be regarded as corrupt and fallen Christian bodies. Most of their members are hardly less in need of the gospel than the followers of Zoroaster or Confucius".⁷ However as years went by the Missionary Societies began to realise that that task was beyond them in terms of resources. The financial demands of the work in non-Christian countries was making this impossible. This was the beginning of a disillusionment that got greater and greater with the passing of the years. In that framework the people of United States

reduced their expectations and centred their aspirations on the extension of Protestantism around the Mexican border of their country. As one speaker argued in the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1876 "the evangelisation of the Roman Catholic countries of our continent is in itself sufficient to absorb all interest".⁸ As was the case in Europe, it was difficult to convince American Protestants to support missionary activity in areas where there was already a strong presence of a branch of Christianity. In this, the large missionary societies of Europe and United States were agreed: Both should concentrate their attention on the non-Western countries. Thus, instead of supporting missions in Latin America, they did their best to discourage them. However in spite of the efforts of the largest missionary societies to deter all efforts for the evangelisation of Latin America, the Protestant forces already in place there never gave up. They took advantage of any event to draw attention to the needs of Latin America.

Indeed the voice for Latin America was heard at the earliest missionary congresses. The arguments were almost always the same, emphasizing the failure of the Roman Catholic Church. In the Conference in New York in 1900, the report of the missionary work in Mexico maintained that to these workers the moral degradation that had got into the Roman Church was enough argument to disavow those who advocated respecting the Roman Catholic version of Christianity.⁹ For SAMS religion in Latin America was superstitious

and degraded.¹⁰ In Central America, a miscellaneous section in CAM's bulletin described in 1901, quoting the words of the Rev. Lund, the decadence of the Roman Church thus:

Zeal without knowledge;	Religion without a revelation;
Faith without God's word;	Penances without repentance;
Fasting without temperance;	Charity without forbearance;
Ceremonies without piety;	Celibacy without chastity;
Tradition without truthfulness;	Transubstantiation without inward reality
Salvation without holiness	Absolution without purification
Purgatory without purification;	Absolution without amendment;
Infallibility without assurance;	Miracles without evidence;
Masses without sense;	Sainthood without sanctification. ¹¹

SAMS and other societies were always ready to disavow the argument that Latin America was already part of Christendom. To give strength to this view they argued that even Roman Catholic authorities such as the English Cardinal Newman were concerned about the behaviour of Roman Catholic faithful in Latin America. It was said that even Cardinal Newman "was so stunned by the accounts of lack of morality amongst professing Christians in South America that he sent a ship load of Spanish New Testaments as the best corrective, but the Bishops there were not willing to distribute them among their own clergy".¹²

Thomas Wood justified Protestant intervention on the argument that the Roman Catholic membership was breaking away from the influence of their priests:

History is repeating itself, and that which our forefathers did when threw off the galling yoke of corruption, is apparently

beginning to take place in South America...But with the same force and intensity which we condemn the system, we must tenderly pity and have concern for our brethren who for ages have been so misled. Let us bear in mind that in England the emancipation from Romanism was a return to the pure Christian faith of the Primitive Church, where as in South America, while the revolt is fast spreading they have no clear knowledge of the Word and love of God, and know not to whom to turn and many there are who with longing heart await the message of the Gospel. ¹³

On that ground the advocates of Protestant evangelisation of Latin America refused to distinguish between the religious condition of the non-Christian countries and that of Latin America. According to C.W. Dress the situation of this continent was "worse off than any great pagan field. It is dominated by a single mighty hierarchy, -the mightiest known in history,- which augments its might by monopolising the gospel, not in order to evangelise the masses, but to dominate them, and to make their evangelisation impossible".¹⁴

The missionaries refused to be discouraged. In the Missionary Conference of 1900 they called on the authors of handbooks of geography to stop classifying the countries of the continent "as Christians which have already the gospel and need not to be evangelised".¹⁵ On this same note the agent of the B.F.B.S. in Central America complained that the literature which identified these countries as already affected by Christianity overlooked the fact that the kind of Christianity "was so debased that Roman Catholic immigrants from foreign countries will not uncommonly disavow all connection with the popular religion, and attend Protestant places of worship."¹⁶ In

short the Protestant missions refused on principle allow the presence of the Roman Catholic Church to deter them from working in Latin America. On the contrary, they believed that their version of Christianity must openly compete with that of the Roman Catholic Church.

There were missionaries who had a clear idea of struggling to ensure that the Protestant religion replaced Roman Catholicism as the dominant Christian faith in Latin America. The authors of the book, Protestant Missions in South America(1900) was one of the first to give an overview of the Protestant work in this region. The authors believed that the missionary force must be prepared to face up to the Roman Catholic Church. Referring to Venezuela they spoke of a "future contest between Romanism and Protestantism". These authors used expressions that reflected their intransigent opposition to the Roman Catholic Church. They maintained that "the greatest of all the battlefields between Romanism and Evangelism is South America, and the Great reformation will achieve there far-reaching triumphs".¹⁷ The battle, for Protestant missionaries such as Paul Burgess was one battle between faith and works.

Faith and works: It might be supposed that Catholicism with its doctrine of salvation by works should have produced different results and that Protestantism and especially Calvinism with its emphasis upon the sovereignty of God and salvation by faith would have the results we are nothing in Catholicism. The truth of the matter is that Protestantism in its effort to restore the true gospel has brought the first ray of hope into thousands of lives formerly without hope to

name of God constantly on their lips.¹⁸

In this battle the Protestant missionaries had to show that their worship and beliefs were superior in all ways to those of Roman Catholic Church. Burgess for instance, insists that even the Protestant hymns were better than those of the Catholics. However he noted that "Onward Christian Soldiers" may not compare favourably from an aesthetic stand point with "Ave Maria".¹⁹

It was the coming confrontation with the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America that, according these authors, "calls for the most energetic action known to modern missionary enterprise [because] the regeneration of South America could not arise from within, and therefore should be introduced by propaganda from without".²⁰

This emphasis on competition with the Roman Church has been a principle of the Protestant Missions from the outset and it has survived until today. The missionaries, as good children of their society, believed that freedom of choice, one of the fundamental principles of the capitalist system, applied also to religious values. The Commission on Cooperation and Unity with other forces in the field at Panama put it thus:

Nothing should be imposed on these people, but they should be given an intelligent opportunity to exercise freedom of choice on the form of religious faith. To withhold from them the fullest knowledge of evangelical principles would be to deny them their rights.²¹

Ironically this "competition factor" became part and parcel of relations between the missionary societies themselves. This came about (1) because the first missionary societies believed, like the Roman Catholic Church, that being the first to arrive on the field should prevent other societies from entering; and (2) because Protestant missions in Latin America failed to coordinate their efforts and live in harmony as representatives of the same persuasion.

3. Spain as a land of Mission

Early in the nineteenth century several missionary societies endeavoured to introduce Protestantism to Spain. Although these attempts were a complete failure, it is important to consider the Spanish mission as a background to the efforts of the European and North American Missionary Societies in Latin America.

It is clear that the British people who complained that the missionary movement had neglected Latin America had not realised the obstacles that the work in Spain was facing. Indeed it can be argued that the missionary societies ignored Latin America precisely because of this experience in Spain. They knew well the limitations that mission work in a devoutly Roman Catholic Christian society must face. The decision of the leadership of the missionary societies to turn down Latin America as a field of mission is inextricably bound up with the hardship and eventual failure of the Protestant missions to Spain.

In terms of the expansion of Protestant ideas Spain was doubtless a

lost cause for European missions. The rigid intolerance on the part of the State and the established Church there proved impossible to overcome. Given the colonial relationship between Spain and Latin American countries which lasted for more than four centuries, the religious outlook in Spain was transferred to Latin America with the same intolerance towards all foreign religious concepts.

In this section I will describe the factors that permeated the attempts to propagate Protestant ideas in Spain, and suggest how this experience was paralleled in the Protestant mission to Latin America.

At first sight we might say that the motivation behind the attempted evangelisation of Spain was the fact that some Protestant leaders strongly believed the Roman Catholic Church to be a corrupt version of Christianity. Indeed this argument was constantly expressed by those missionaries who worked there. Yet there were also other reasons that went beyond the religious factor. These, we will try to describe in this section.

Perspective of Spain as a past colonial power

In the missionary records of the nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth centuries there is no evidence that British or American Protestants questioned the essential righteousness of the colonial process. On the contrary the missionary societies interpreted their nation's colonies as a blessing from God bestowing on their nations richness and power. For them that power was God's reward for their fidelity as Protestant nations. That is why we hardly see any criticism by

missionaries of the colonial relationship as based upon aggression directed towards their colonies. While there were exceptional cases where the missionary representatives expressed concern for the damage their countries caused to other nations, this was by no means the rule.

This way of the Protestant missionaries viewing the colonialism of their countries was diaphanously expressed in the way they looked on old glories of Spain as colonial power. In the nineteenth century it is not common to find references of Protestant missionaries questioning the material consequences of Spanish colonialism. The criticism of Spain was basically religious. The missionary animosity against Spain was not based on her role as a colonial power, but on her failure to spread the correct version of Christianity. Her exploitation of her colonies was not questioned, only her failure to attend to the spiritual needs of the inhabitants of the colonies. Missionaries indicted Spain not for the massacres of native peoples and the destruction of their cultures, but for allowing native populations to retain legacies of the paganism of their forbears.

To criticise Spanish colonialism would be to criticise the colonialism of their own country, and that was out of the question. Most people in the imperialist nations thought that the countries they dominated were morally and spiritually responsible for being in such a degenerated situation; and that God had raised the colonial powers to correct the vices of pagan nations. For Frederick Crowe, pioneer of the

Protestant work in Guatemala, Spain had condemned herself for failing to fulfil her colonial responsibilities:

The perdition of numberless souls whose ruin she sealed, the slaughter of millions...the reduction to brigandage of the remnant which her sanguinary fury spared and the perversion of her spoils to pamper her own luxury and pride, were crimes sufficient to provoke the retribute curse. That curse and the brand of the oppressor are all that now cleave to Spain...Their forefather, who were appointed by the all-wise and just Creator for the correction and preservation of offending races, and not for their destruction, by a faithful discharge of their commission and trust, might have earned the gratitude of mankind, and their posterity would now have repeated the greatest advantage in multiplied blessings both at home and from those who would have been benefited.²²

The elevation of colonial powers into instruments of God was reflected in the struggles between them. The replacement of one colonial power by another was often seen as resulting from the failure to use the opportunity God had given. Thus, God enables Great Britain to take over some Spanish possession mainly because Spain had failed to use the opportunity God had given her. Spain's loss of political and financial control over her colonies was due to her infidelity before God's insight. As Crowe observed:

National ascendancy, like personal genius, is a sacred deposit, confided to responsible agents for the furtherance of God's beneficent purposes towards the universal family of man, and its perversion to selfish ends has always been followed by national marks of Divine displeasure. Spain was the chosen instrument to subdue and lay prostrate in the dust the pride of many American nations, and cruelly did she abuse the power with which she was entrusted. That nation has also in its turn been checked and reduced by others, among whom

most of its extensive dominions, accumulated wealth, and boasted glory, have been distributed as the hire of armies and reward of services against her.²³

And in a direct allusion to Great Britain this author suggested that the experience that Spain went through should be "a warning to other nations who may be circumstanced as she once was".²⁴

First attempts of evangelisation

In this section I am especially indebted to the excellent Ph.D thesis of Valentino Sitoy; British Evangelical Missions to Spain in the Nineteenth Century, submitted at New College, Edinburgh, in 1972.

Spain began to feel the Protestant presence by the end of the Napoleonic era. The missionary effort launched from Britain to disseminate scriptures and literature was known as "Spanish Evangelisation".²⁵

In the literature describing the efforts of Protestant missionaries in Spain we see several reasons for doing so. Motivations ranged from the simple fact that the Christianity of Roman Catholic Church was not pure, to the responsibility Great Britain had as God's chosen country, to the beneficial social implications that Protestantism signified for poor countries. Just as in other lands where the Roman Catholic religion prevailed, one of the strongest motives in the case of Spain was the decadent nature of the Roman Catholic Church. As the historian Sitoy maintained:

Spanish evangelisation" was used or understood, one thing

is certain. It was founded on the evangelical Protestant view that Christianity in Spain had stayed away from the true understanding of the Gospel, and had degenerated, under the influence of Rome, into a superstitious and idolatrous worship. Therefore it was the duty of Protestants to introduce "pure Christianity" into that country.²⁶

That was classic Evangelical understanding of the Roman Catholic Church, in which there was no recognisable good in it. Roman Catholicism as such was a failure and consequently must be replaced as a religion. Reformed Christianity was destined to defeat and supplant "popery", being vastly superior to the latter in every respect. Since the latter had its chief stronghold in Spain, it would receive a death-blow, if it were defeated in that country.²⁷

Another motivation for evangelisation everywhere was the responsibility that Britain had as a privileged nation. Britain had a special relationship with God that must be shared with other nations. Some British church people had the conviction that:

because of their faithfulness to the Reformation, the British were God's favoured people. Those who held this view believed that they as such a people, had a manifest destiny for world leadership, and that they had been ordained by God to be the instrument for giving the nations the blessings of a truly Christian civilisation. The development of this concept, understandably enough, accompanied the rise of the British Empire, so that by the 1850's, it had apparently matured as a peculiar religious interpretation of history. As a free church writer in Scotland said in 1853: "We look upon Britain as chosen of God to show that Christianity can make a nation."²⁸

It was for such reasons that Protestant evangelicals reasoned

that Spain through the encounter with a "real" Christianity could recover her power and influence as a colonial power. Sitoy sees a combination of humanitarian feeling and admiration for Spain's glorious past as the motive for the evangelization of Spain. The former is related to many references to Spain in British religious journals of the period which described that country as "benighted", "poor" and "unhappy". The phrase "poor needy Spain" was a constant refrain in the writing of the leading advocates of Spanish Evangelisation. The latter perception is related to the "earnest, somewhat paternalistic, attempt to sympathise with Spain's struggle to reform her social institutions".²⁹

British Protestants linked the poverty of Spain and the loss of her past glory to the pernicious influence of the Roman Catholic Church. Some said that "freed from the bondage of "popery" Spain may yet be recrowned with her former glory, her missionaries going to foreign lands, this time under the banner of the Evangelical faith.³⁰ Protestant writers had time and again put forward the view that were it not for Philip II and the Inquisition, the Protestant Reformation would undoubtedly have won in Spain.³¹

To reinforce the idea that Protestantism was linked to material prosperity British church people pointed to the way in which Britain had replaced Spain in the colonial scene:

Much was made of the fact that by the nineteenth century, the relative positions of England and Spain three hundred years earlier had been exactly reversed. Then Spain was mistress over more than two hundred million people, while England then ruled only over four. Now the British ruled the seas, and the British standard floated over the most distant parts of the world.³²

Secondly, they emphasized the economic development of Protestant countries in contrast to the poverty of Roman Catholic countries, especially Spain and Portugal.

Frequent comparisons were made between the "progress" of Protestant Great Britain, Holland, the United States and Prussia and the apparent backwardness of Catholic lands, notably Spain and Portugal. As one evangelical writer proudly affirmed in 1853: "In wealth, in enterprise, in national liberty, in literature, in commerce, in all the elements of political and moral power Protestants are to Papal nations as the sun and moon in the heavens are to the fixed stars."³³

The optimism that characterised the promoters of the evangelisation of Spain did not last long. Relatively soon they realised that their efforts were not producing the results for which they had hoped. They found themselves defenceless before the great opposition which the propagation of the Protestant ideas met in Spain. The Missionary societies had to face reality, and evaluate the continued investment of financial resources in a European nation such as Spain while Africa and Asia captivated the attention of the missionary leadership. Among missionary circles, moreover, it was generally believed that only those directed to the heathen were real missions in the strict sense of the word.³⁴

By the last third of the nineteenth century, interest in continental missions to nominal Catholics was waning. The hatred of the Spanish people for the Catholic system no longer had its original intensity.³⁵

The foregoing reasons meant that when the missionary societies were compelled to reduce their expenditure, the work that suffered most was the mission to predominantly Roman Catholic countries.

As early as 1843, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society expressed this view, when it said that "amidst the increasing wants of the missions in purely heathen countries ...It was not possible to employ in Gibraltar another missionary to the Spaniards. The same view was likewise taken by the United Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. The secretary of that board though himself a staunch supporter of Spain evangelisation, stated in 1872 that "our Spanish Mission is proving an expensive one, to a degree beyond our calculation; therefore, retrenchment had to be done. But in the same breath, he also said: "our Indian China and Caffrarian missions are all expanding, and must expand.³⁶

It was pointless for the missionary societies to continue supporting efforts in areas of strong opposition, while, they believed there were other areas of the world desirous of receiving this message. Indeed the situation of intolerance that characterised Spain and her colonies was a factor that cooled down any earlier interest in the promotion of Protestantism.

Religious liberty was always the sine qua non condition that enabled Protestant missions to gain a foothold in quarters where the official religion was not Protestant. The missionary effort in Spain never knew liberty of action. That religious conditions in Spain did not

allow any progress for Protestantism was noted by the British diplomat Sir Richard Panekam in answer to a request made in 1851 by Viscount Palmerston, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Palmerston wished to know what facilities the Roman Catholic Churches were giving to the exercise of Protestant religion. For this purpose he asked reports from Ministers at Foreign Courts and from Consuls discharging diplomatic functions. The report of Panekam on Spain confirmed to some extent the fears of the missionary societies that eventually led to the reduction to their efforts in Spain.

The profession of the Roman Catholic religion is even indissolubly bound up with the fact of being Spaniard; that is to say, no man is admitted to the privileges of one, be the place of his birth where it may, unless he profess the declared faith of the country. Persons apostatizing are banished by law, and there is penalty of from five to seven years imprisonment inflicted by the new penal code of 1848 on persons attempting to proselytise or seduce persons from the catholic belief.....By the law of the land there but one religion professed in Spain, the Roman Catholic, and no other form of worship is tolerated; therefore, until this law, which is declared also in the Constitution of the country, is changed, no facility for the establishment of Protestant chapels can be given, for it is not a matter which depends on the private opinions of individuals in power, or on the aggregate degree of liberality pervading any cabinet.³⁷

Even the commercial treaty that Great Britain negotiated with Spain revealed what little chance of success Protestantism had there. The same report to Palmerston said on this account that:

By treaty a foreign representative may privately perform service according to the form of this country in his own house, or in some locality thereto attached coming under the diplomatic fiction of extraterritoriality, but such place must have no public entrance or any external form of appendages to designate it as a place of worship. Also by treaty burial grounds are conceded to the English in any place where there

is a consul residing, but it is interpreted that there shall be no public services performed over the bodies, which is in fact consonant with the law stated in the first paragraph of this dispatch as to the prohibition of all kinds of worship save one, as well as the fact of being entirely irrespective of the Executive, and depending on what may be called the statute and common law of Spain, which I believe has never varied on this point.³⁸

4. Latin America in the Missionary Conferences

The aim of this section is to glance at missionary congresses in order to see to what extent Latin America was part of their concern. A worldwide missionary programme was a central concern in all the European and North American missionary conferences that took place after 1854. However it was not until the well known missionary conference held in Edinburgh in 1910 that this dream acquired its full expression.

These conferences were significant not only because they reflected the raison d'être of Protestantism as an expansionist religion, but also, because they helped to define the missiological and theological concepts that would later shape the work of the Missionary societies.

Most of the undenominational efforts or "Faith Missions" that arrived in Latin America in the late nineteenth century blamed the Edinburgh Conference for showing marked unwillingness to equate the religious needs of Latin America with those of other continents. In view of the earlier prevalence of the idea of "the neglected continent" this accusation must be seen as only a half truth. It does not take into account all the processes that before 1910 led to Latin America having

been overlooked within the nineteenth-century missionary movement.

In fact the position on Latin America taken in Edinburgh in 1910 was the culmination of the attitude which viewed Latin America as already part of Christendom because of the presence of the Roman Catholic Church. The missionary societies working in Latin America expected to receive support from the conference. In this, however, their hopes were frustrated. The Edinburgh Conference was called and sponsored by churches that in previous decades had not accepted the idea of Latin America as a land of mission. Therefore any optimism for an increase of the work in Latin America as a result of the congress was bound to be misplaced.

In the missionary congresses held before Edinburgh 1910 theoretically speaking there was no intention in theory of cutting off Latin America from a worldwide missionary programme. Those congresses, unlike Edinburgh, had basically sought to promote fellowship among missionary societies. Delegates to those conferences did not see their purpose as that of taking formal decisions on present or future missionary work.

Let us have a look of the missionary congresses before that of Edinburgh. The first ecumenical missionary conference was held in New York in 1854 on the occasion of Alexander Duff's visit to the United States. One of the most important outcomes of that conference was the increased interest among churches of the United States in the

missionary enterprise. Nevertheless we do not know for sure if Latin America was among the regions to be affected in future missionary strategy. What is certain is that in the missionary congresses following the New York conference of 1854 Latin America was included on the agenda.

The second important missionary event of an interdenominational nature took place in Liverpool, England in 1860. Here there was a report on South America given by the Anglican bishop W.H. Stirling.³⁹ However, on the whole Latin America was given very little attention.

At the next conference, held in London in 1888, Latin America, was given more attention. On this occasion we find passages that seek to put Latin America on the same footing as Asia and Africa . We should note that the report on the missionary needs of Latin America was included in the same section as the report dealing with the American Indians.⁴⁰

For the first time in a missionary conference Latin America is considered as part of the missionary map. Arthur Pierson worked out the campaign of action of the conference in the following terms:

Look at the map. I wish I could in colours portray instance, from the eastern limit of Liberia and Senegambia, towards the western limit of the Valley of the Nile, and the go directly south, between the great lakes in the east and those noble stations which Henry Grattam Guinness and his heroic company of workers established, from Banana, at the mouth of the Congo, to Equatorville, we shall find one entire district of darkness scarcely lit up by a Missionary station. If we start at the eastern boundaries of the Caspian Sea and journey

through Turkestan and Tibet to the mountainous limits on East Mongolia, we shall find another district scarcely lit up with a Missionary station. If you start from the southern shore of Florida, and draw a line directly through Texas to the Pacific coast, the entire territory south of that line to the limits of Tierra del Fuego are dark, with scarce any light whatever, under the deepest degradation of the most superstitious forms of Roman Catholicism.⁴¹

This statement implicitly acknowledges that the presence of the Roman Catholic Church could not be an obstacle to the expansion of Protestantism into lands under its religious control. Arthur Pierson went further by mentioning the present ignoring of such lands on the part of Protestant churches:

There are three republics in South America in which, ten years ago, there was but a single Protestant Christian labourer, and she was godly woman who could not allow these dark places to remain without at least an effort for their evangelisation. I need not to stop to speak of the awful and melancholy facts of the darkness of heathenism, and I shall not stop to speak of the apathy and lethargy of the Christian Church. Think of ten millions of dollars being the aggregate sum given by the magnificent nations of Christendom every year for the evangelisation of the globe.⁴²

The fourth important ecumenical conference took place in New York in 1900. This conference was in every sense different from the previous ones and managed to bring together the most important sections of the missionary movement. For this reason some people viewed this as the only conference, before Edinburgh 1910, that can be looked on as technically ecumenical.

For the first time there appear representatives of missionary movements that were working exclusively in Latin America. Before

this, the work in Latin America was represented basically through SAMS, but now new advocates of the Protestant evangelisation of Latin America had emerged, for instance the Central American Mission (CAM), which was the pioneer of the Protestant work among the Spanish population of most of the countries of the Central American Isthmus. The Bulletin of CAM on the congress of New York reveals to some extent the harmonious spirit among the different missionary societies:

The Ecumenical Missionary Council that met in New York city the last of April, was a great meeting in many respects, Nearly all the missionary societies in the world were represented, our secretary, Rev. C.I. Scofield, representing our mission. The attendance was immense, both of missionaries and rope holders, and we trust much good will come of this interchange of thoughts about carrying the glorious old gospel to the whole creation. Harmony and good fellowship was unbroken in all the meetings, and the clear ringing declarations on the very important subject of comity among missionaries, and against "the unnecessary over-lapping of fields of labor" and against "all unfriendly criticism of the missionaries or methods of sister societies" were superb and we trust will be heeded by all the Societies. ⁴³

In this conference representatives of all the regions, including Latin America, had the opportunity to set out for the audience the scope and limitations of what was happening in the expansion of Protestantism. The development of Protestant work in Latin America was considered on 23rd April.⁴⁴

In the conference of New York 1900 it was made clear, more than at any previous conference, that Roman Catholic lands were as legitimate a field for evangelisation as were the Mohammedan lands.

Rev. W. Hubert Brown put this idea thus:

Now, why do we say that the Roman Catholic Missions failed? Why do we claim it is necessary to send men and spend money to establish missions in those countries? In the first place, because of the corrupting influence that entered into the priesthood and into monasteries, owing to increase of wealth and power. The wealth amassed was not always employed for the conversion of the people... For many of the missionaries of the first centuries of Roman Catholicism; for their heroic sacrifices; for their wonderful efforts, we have nothing but admiration. But they were representatives of a system radically defective.⁴⁵

In 1900 Barbrooke Grubb, (1865-1930), first appointed as a Lay Catechist to Keppel in the West Falklands in 1886, and later pioneer and superintendent of the Chaco Paraguayan work of SAMS in 1890) (known as the "Livingstone of South America") asserted that "time would fail to tell of the vast South American continent where but the dull light of an effete Romanism makes darkness visible, but where the priest has overshot his mark and alienated the men".⁴⁶

Finally we arrive at the well known Edinburgh Conference of 1910. This event was a real turning point in the history of missions. It became a real melting pot of all the missionary organisations which now agreed, as never before, to work out a strategy of cooperation and unity in order to implement a programme of worldwide evangelisation.

However for missionary organisations which were working on the fringe of the missionary societies of the biggest Protestant churches of Europe and United States, Edinburgh 1910 meant an attempt to

prevent them from carrying out efforts in Roman Catholic lands. Once again the Faith Missions would blame the directors of this event for not inspiring work in regions beyond Asia and Africa.

In fact at Edinburgh 1910 the delegates not only declined to consider Latin America as a land of mission, but also avoided taking a hard line against the Roman Catholic Church, contrary to what had happened in previous conferences. This conference was bitterly disappointing for those who were already working in Latin America. The chronicle of the SAMS magazine about the conference pointed out that the "work among Roman Catholics did not find a place in the programme of the Conference, but it was indirectly referred to more than once. This is a branch of Christian work which we in South America cannot overlook".⁴⁷

While many of the Churches supported some work in Latin American countries, it seems that their work there was largely incidental. Among the churches with some presence in Latin America were the Anglicans in Great Britain, Lutherans in Germany, and the Presbyterians and Baptists in the United States.

For the most part, however, the main Protestant churches were captivated by the religious condition of the non-Christian people in Asia and Africa. This explains why these churches did not openly support the interest of those who came to the conference hoping to see their efforts in Latin America strengthened. Yet it was impossible to silence the voice of those who advocated the evangelisation of Latin

America. Delegates of SAMS and RMBU were among organisations which represented the propagation of Protestant work in Latin America. Both these British organisations had joined in the preparatory process for the Edinburgh Conference in the hope that their work in Latin America would be included in the worldwide programme that would emerge of the conference.⁴⁸

It was due only to the presence of these organisations that the delegates were given any information on the religious setting of Latin American countries. According to the report on the Protestant presence in Latin America, The South American Evangelical Mission had 33 workers in these two Republics and some 500 converts.⁴⁹ At the same time the Central American Mission had 28 foreign missionaries, including wives, about 70 churches, and 1100 members.⁵⁰

Although the official literature of the Conference filled more than 10 volumes, the section relating to Latin America hardly covered more than one page. But the very presence of Protestant workers in Latin America was enough to call into question the idea of the Roman Catholic Church as an authentic bearer of Christianity in these lands.

The report on South America cast doubts on the then widespread idea that "the Roman Catholic Church claims three-fourths of people there as Christianized. The opinion among them, is that this is an overestimate. (As) There are whole tribes which have never been visited by bishops of the different Republics and among whom there are no resident priests".⁵¹

We have said that one of the main reasons that led the missionary leadership to exclude Latin America as a land of mission was the urgency attached to the evangelisation of the non-Christian cultures of Asia and Africa. The organisers argued that the huge population of countries such as China and Japan was enough to absorb all the resources. So the exclusion of Latin America in Edinburgh 1910 at first sight appears as a matter of making the best use of finance . Nevertheless it is beyond doubt that there was also a strong movement of liberal theology in the main churches, which held that Protestants had to respect the differences between their Christianity and that practiced by the Roman Catholic Church, just as they should respect the Christianity of other persuasions such as the Greek Orthodox Church. There was also in the background the fact that some missionary societies of the United States and Europe had been supporting efforts toward the evangelisation of the population of other Protestant countries. Some religious groups in both continents thought that, for instance, the Lutherans in Germany and Anglicans in Britain had abandoned the pure principles of the Reformation. In other words, these churches on whose financial support, the Conference in Edinburgh rested did not want the logic used by SAMS, and other missions in considering Latin America to be a field for Protestant Missions, to be applied to their own churches and country.

5. The shadow of the Monroe Doctrine

In the history of colonial expansion, conflict between the different powers involved was conspicuous. The tension between Europe and the United States for the control of markets and geopolitical zones became a dominant factor and was expressed in the political statement called the "Monroe Doctrine". The Monroe Doctrine was an ideology of the United States that had the facade of protecting the Latin American continent from the damage which could result from European expansionism after Napoleon was defeated in 1815. The Monroe Doctrine was part of the seventh annual message that President Monroe sent to Congress on December 2, 1823. President Monroe, among other comments, made two statements that taken together constituted the Monroe Doctrine:

(1) The American continents, by the free and independent conditions which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonisation by European powers. And (2) The political system of the [European] allied powers is essentially different from that of America. We owe it, therefore, to candour and to the amicable resolutions existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any position of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety.⁵²

In this section our purpose is not to work out the outcome of the Monroe Doctrine, but to put forward briefly how this attempt of the United States to keep Europe distant from Latin America had repercussions in the religious situation of the time, and especially how the legacy of this "doctrine" can be seen in the argument for

considering Latin America as a land of mission. I am not intending to demonstrate that the reflection of this doctrine on religious affairs had the purpose of keeping British or European Protestant work out of Latin America. There is not enough evidence to support this. It seems that this doctrine did not have real implications for the pioneering Protestant work of SAMS and its advocacy of British commercial interests in Latin America. We can see this in the statement of the anonymous writer of the article "The Early Labours of the Jesuits in South America"(1859) who argued not long after the Monroe Doctrine was declared in 1824, that he believed that "God was calling British Christians to attend to the spiritual wants of the inhabitants of South America".⁵³ Decades later the same organisation expressed British aims towards Latin America thus:

Let us look upon South America with the same feelings that prompted the noble-hearted of the fifteen century to look towards the double continent, - as a discovery of new land, not for Spain or for England, but for Christ to claim...Let us go on in faith. Let us who belong to this humble but ambitious Society be like Christopher Columbus.⁵⁴

In the first decade of this century SAMS made clear their interest to compete religiously with the presence of the United States in the region, and encouraged their country to take note of the new financial opportunities that were going to come from the opening of the Panama Canal. The chairman of SAMS said:

We, in the Church of England, are sometimes said to be a little bit behind the times ...This applies to South America, where the chief places have already been occupied by Roman

Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists and we Church people are lagging behind. I do not think it is quite creditable to England, that we should be behind at all and in an enterprise which is entirely one of our great responsibilities. If this is true of North America, I am perfectly convinced that it is true of South America as well. The number of people who are on the western coast alone - I need not speak of the enormous interests in the Argentine Republic- is considerable, and is certain largely to increase when the Panama Canal is opened; and when you think of the British capital invested there, and of the enormous wealth which undoubtedly is to be developed in the future in this great continent, I can only say that the responsibility comes primarily to England, and we ought to be as ashamed of ourselves that we don't recognise it.⁵⁵

The foregoing references indicate that the Monroe Doctrine had not had the least effect on the objectives of British people who had devoted their lives to the expansion of Protestantism in Latin America. On the other hand there are references which suggest that this doctrine strengthened the attitudes of some North American people who advocated the need for a large scale programme of evangelisation in Latin America.

What is certain is that some missionary arguments, unwitting or not, were framed in the shadow of the Monroe Doctrine. The principle "America for Americans", which was at the heart of this doctrine, appears in the conscience of those who were involved in the expansion of Protestant religion. For instance this idea appears in the book, Protestant Missions in South America(1900) published in the United States, and which can be considered one the first attempts to stimulate the development of the American Protestant missions in Latin America. Thomas Wood said:

North American churches have commenced operations at strategic points, tending to evangelise the whole continent. European churches are largely leaving that continent alone. The latter scarcely look after their own members that are emigrating thither, and do almost nothing for the priest-ridden masse. They find enough to do in their own hemisphere, and are leaving America to Americans. Oh, that American churches would open their eyes to the singular duty and opportunity that God has reserved for them in their own hemisphere.⁵⁶

The shadow of the Monroe Doctrine surfaced also in the tensions between some British and European missionary societies, and at times with North American organisations, over the keeping of exclusive religious control of an area. These tensions, to some extent, were a projection of the confrontation between colonial powers. The missions felt they had sole authority to expand Protestantism in the nations and areas which their country had colonised. Indeed, relations between missionary societies were not very friendly. At times they accused the other for wanting to invade a territory that did not belong to them. For instance in Central America and the Philippines there was confrontation between the leaders of the American Bible Society (hereafter ABS) and the British and Foreign Bible Society (hereafter BFBS).

The circumstances that put the representatives of these two organisations at odds with one another reflected something more than domestic troubles related to the arranging of the territorial division between Protestant missions. As the Philippines came under American military control after the war with Spain, some church

people thought that the country should be primarily under the religious control of American Protestant organisations. The ABS' representatives, however, were cautious in making this clear. On paper ABS seemed to be able to cooperate with BFBS. This can be seen in a letter that Haven sent to Sharp in 1901, in which the former said that the ABS' aim in the Philippines was to cooperate "even though it is under the American flag".⁵⁷ But despite of this, BFBS began to see that in practice ABS wanted BFBS to withdraw its work from there because of the American control of the country. In a manner of veiled complaint the British said in correspondence with the ABS:

There is one sentence in your letter in which you say that of course the American Bible Society stands ready to take up the entire work in the Philippines. I do not know whether that is to be interpreted as inviting a reply. It would be difficult for us to withdraw from the Philippines, seeing that we have so large staff employed there, and have undertaken so much translation work.⁵⁸

A year later these fears are confirmed when A. J. Taylor of the BFBS in letter to W.I. Haven declared that they were not willing to leave the work in that country:

I was greatly astonished to receive your communication of the 6th of January in which you refer to a letter from the Rev. J.C. Goodrich your agent in the Philippines containing a statement that Mr. Graham had officially signified the willingness of our Society to withdraw from the Islands. There must be there some misunderstanding ... Our Committee have not discussed the question of the Philippines, except in relation to the possibility of a mutual agreement over the details of the work.⁵⁹

In a similar manner the ABS claimed that the BFBS was

invading its area of influence in the case of Puerto Rico. To this the British answered that "they were glad that their attention had been called to this oversight, as they had long regarded Puerto Rico as distinctly the field of your society, and that they had no intention of intruding upon the ABS' s work".⁶⁰

As we have seen the influence of the Monroe Doctrine had a clear influence on mission affairs. It is interesting that the Monroe Doctrine was another argument, without naming it directly, used by those who opposed the idea of looking upon Latin America as a field for missionary societies from Europe. On other hand it seems that people linked with RBMU and EUSA were convinced that the Monroe Doctrine had hindered British organisations from considering Latin America as a land of mission. This was maintained by the Rev. Stuart McNairn, the British leader of the Evangelical Union of South America (EUSA) in Peru. He bluntly threw off the legacy of the Monroe Doctrine by rejecting the argument that British involvement in the religious life of Latin America represented unfriendly competition with the United States. He asserted: "In Great Britain we need in particular to remove the misapprehension that exists concerning South America. Again and again I hear the charge "Our sister church is already in possession of the field., it is mere impertinence to attempt to work there".⁶¹

The negative effect of the Monroe Doctrine on the propagation of Protestantism in Latin America was acknowledged, in 1916, by Dr.

Paul Burgess of the Presbyterian Mission in Guatemala, who, to his sadness, considered that the Monroe Doctrine contributed to the absence in Latin America of European missionary activity:

One of the effects of the Monroe Doctrine and the feeling which it has come to stand for, is that European missionary societies scarcely work at all in Central America, and the U.S is practically responsible for the evangelisation of these five million souls.⁶²

However other missionary leaders such as Methodist missionary Thomas Wood, were appreciating that the time had come for North American churches to take advantage of the fact that the field has been left exclusively to them:

South America offers a most excellent opportunity for North American evangelism to extend its domain without competition, and work out results on the widest possible scale. South America calls on North American Christians, as the most imperative Macedonian, "Come over and help us."⁶³

British Christians interested in Latin America always rejected that pretension on the ground that North American Christian Missionary societies had never taken seriously the spiritual needs of this continent. In the preface to Geraldine Guinness's book, Peru: Its Story, People and Religion (1909) Professor Alex Macalister in drawing attention to the situation, indicated the religious failure of the Monroe Doctrine in Latin America.

That our British organisations have done comparatively little work in this field is perhaps not surprising when we remember the share of the White Man's burden which they have to bear in the non Christian sections of the many British dependencies in other continents, and in those

countries with which we are closely connected by commerce. But considering the peculiar relationship which the United States claims to bear in the Monroe Doctrine, it is remarkable that the American missionary societies, elsewhere so much in the van of the evangelistic work, have not done more for the spiritual welfare of this less favored sister nation, Peru.⁶⁴

The book Protestant Missions in South America(1900) confirmed this perception of Macalister that little had been done, and called on the North American churches to enrol in a more aggressive missionary enterprise:

North America to the Rescue. South America is situated nearest to North America of all great mission fields, but is more remote from Europe than are many others. The two Americas, isolated from the rest of the world, and joined one to another, have a manifest responsibility each for the other. The people of the United States have not yet awakened to this great fact. South America is less to them than is almost to any other country. This ought not so to be. Oh, for another Columbus to rediscover South America, and reveal her to the North American people in her providential relations to her. It welcomes influences from the United States as from no other field, while it is freer from European influences than almost any other, especially those where European sovereignty is extending. This fact is remarkable when we remember that Europeans abound in South America, while North Americans are few and far between.⁶⁵

To conclude it must be said that although the Monroe Doctrine was apparently not aimed directly at eliminating or restricting the European religious presence in Latin America, it did however have some repercussions on religious work. It should be noted that President Monroe had a great deal of interest in missions and that he through the Secretary of war John C. Calhoun, co-operated closely with the missionaries. ⁶⁶

6. Breaking the wall

As we have seen Latin America was a "neglected continent" in that it was expressly excluded from any missionary strategy of European and North American mainstream Churches. That does not mean that there were no efforts towards the expansion of Protestant ideas in these countries.

Not being a primary concern of the great missionary societies placed Latin America on the fringe of the Protestant missionary movement. The presence of Protestant missions in Latin America before 1916 was casual or due only to the interest of some individuals rather than the result of a keenly organised programme.

The Protestant presence in Latin America had two early waves in the nineteenth century. The first was mainly directed at the English speaking black population located the main ports of the Atlantic Coast, and was supported by North American, German, and especially British Churches. The latter were favoured by Great Britain's maritime control and her colonial interest in those regions. Their presence however was confined strictly to the British protectorate, and there was also Protestant work in areas such as British Guiana, British Honduras or Belize, the Mosquito Coast of Nicaragua and other regions under British influence. This kind of Protestant presence which has been called "the Protestantism of immigration" arrived along with the merchants and sailors coming to Latin America during and after the process of political independence from Spain and Portugal.

Achieving independence from Spain, Latin America presented great opportunities for British commercial interests and thus for the Protestant activities as well. All this was reflected in a considerable flood of British immigrants who had been prevented by trade restrictions before Latin America split from Spain. Thus the Anglican Church claimed a religious interest, not only for the propagation of the gospel but also for the pastoral care of the British subjects. This pastoral care of the immigrants, exercised mainly by chaplaincies, was put under the supervision of the Bishop of London. Under this supervision, the first Anglican chapels in Latin America were built in Latin America. Kenneth S. Latourette recounts that the first Protestant Church in Latin America was the Anglican chapel erected in Rio de Janeiro in 1819.⁶⁷

The second wave developed from the interest that some Church leaders showed in Protestant evangelisation in Latin America, even in countries under Spanish control. The first moves towards the Spanish and aborigine population in the continent appeared as early as the American Board of Missions came into being; though apparently the Board was soon diverted:

At the outset of the Boards' operations, however, the directors argued in correspondence with the London Missionary Society that discouragements of past Indian evangelistic endeavour, as well as unsettled conditions in South America, pointed them to the more promising field of the eastern Hemisphere.⁶⁸

In 1816, the Board under criticism of those who thought that

they were trying to do too much abroad and too little at home, indicated that its main interest was in assuming its responsibility for evangelisation at home and in nearby regions. In an indirect allusion to Latin America, the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Missions, said:

fully aware, that many friends of missions, not only in this country, but also in Europe, have thought it strange, that while so much has been doing for the distant heathen of India, so little should have been done for the less destitute tribes on our continent, and within our borders.⁶⁹

Among the first efforts on the part of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was their decision, as early as 1833-1834, to send people to explore the possibilities of missions to aborigines in Patagonia. However the explorers reported failure, and as a result of their recommendation, the Board decided not to take any further action.⁷⁰

The same thing happened when Dr. John C. Brigham, Secretary of the American Board, was sent to Buenos Aires, Argentina, with instructions to visit the republics of South America. The outcome of this visit over a period of about two years was that the Brigham report did not advocate "the occupation at that time on the ground of the predominant influence of the Popish priesthood on the several governments".⁷¹

There are other sources that refer to Latin America as a prospective American Protestant field of work. At the end of the century Methodist and Presbyterian Churches of United States had

already begun some work in Latin America. The intentions of the Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church of United States in 1854 to step up their presence in Latin America was clear:

The Board will be willing, however, and is desirous, to send missionaries to some places on the borders of Mexico, the Isthmus of Panama, and to some of the South American States. A minister was appointed at one time to a station on the Isthmus of Panama, but the state of his health induced him eventually to decline entering upon this work. A minister of the Presbytery of New York has been sent lately to Buenos Aires.⁷²

John Lowrie, the historian who was secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, did show great interest in enlisting American churches to propagate the Protestant version of Christianity. We have in his book Manual of Missions published in 1854, an early example of this continent occupying a place as an unevangelized land in Protestant cartography.

Though it seems that these actions did represent a real interest, there were obviously great obstacles that deterred the North American Churches from carrying out a sustained programme in Latin America. These meant their efforts were isolated and not part of any consistent plan.

Some Churches which already had some work in these countries were not convinced of the need to increase their presence in the region. This was evidenced in the process that led to the North American Presbyterian church's hesitant decision to open work in Guatemala in 1881. I will take up this topic later in the chapter three. But for now it is relevant to say that, in spite of the fact that the

President of Guatemala had made a formal request for the arrival of the Protestant Church there was great hesitation on the part of those within the church in United States whether or not to respond this call. That hesitation, which angered the Guatemalan President, delayed the arrival of the first Presbyterian missionary.

Allen Francis Gardiner: Pioneer of the Protestant work

The efforts that really challenged the missionary movement in their responsibilities for Latin America are linked with Captain Allen Francis Gardiner. He was an officer of the British Navy who became first interested in the evangelization of Zulus, and arrived at Cape Town and made his way to Zululand, Natal, in 1822. Unsuccessful in his mission he sailed to South America in 1838.

Gardiner, founder of the Patagonian Missionary Society that later became SAMS, was one of the first persons who, in a organised way, advocated against the current the need for the Protestant evangelisation of Latin America. Before his work there was no missionary organisation in Europe or the United States desirous of taking on Latin America as a mission field on the same footing as Africa and Asia.

Gardiner systematically began to convince the Missionary Societies in Great Britain of the burden he felt regarding the aborigines, first in Patagonia and then in all South America. The biographical sketches of SAMS reflect, on one hand, the untiring struggle of Gardiner to achieve his purpose, and on other hand, the

unenthusiastic answers he received from the church leaders as to his dream. On this latter Page said that Gardiner:

was very disappointed that his appeal to the Church Missionary Society had been unavailing, in consequence of their low state of funds. After applying several times to the Church Missionary Society he went to the Wesleyan Missionary Society, with a like result, and finally to the London Missionary Society, but from the same needs of funds, in vain. This being the case he appealed to the Christian people of his country, and printed his cry for help.⁷³

Gardiner undertook a long and tiring campaign to convince different missionary societies that this work could be adopted as theirs, and thus included in their budgets. As time went by, he realised that the rigidity of the approach of the programmes of these missions did not give them room to respond to his concern. Historically the efforts of Gardiner are important on the ground that they represent a systematic attempt to break down the wall that prevented Latin America from being looked upon as a field for Protestant missions. Any historical sketch of the Latin American Protestant movement will have to recognise in Gardiner and SAMS the real pioneers of Protestant evangelisation in Latin America. The history of missions in Latin America does not tell of any significant efforts before Gardiner to advocate the cause of Latin America.

Gardiner had visited South America for the first time in 1838. His intentions were threefold : (a) to work primarily with the aborigines, (b) to fulfil the religious needs of the English colonists, (c) and finally to evangelise the Portuguese and Spanish population.⁷⁴

Full of hardships, Gardiner's life ended when he died of famine in Patagonia in 1851 leaving in his journal the sketch of a plan, bearing the title The South American Missionary Society.⁷⁵

After a long struggle, SAMS, conscious of the fact that it was unlikely to survive as an independent mission, managed to get recognition from the Anglican Church to work under its umbrella. However this did not mean that they had won the battle for the recognition of Latin America as a land of mission. On the contrary we see in the reports in SAMS magazine constant complaints about the limitations that the small financial aid it was receiving from Anglican missionary agencies imposed on its work.

In addition, functioning under the financial control of the Anglican Church clearly defined its sphere of activity. Their privilege to work among the aborigines of South America came directly from this relationship with the official Church of England; but there was little willingness inside the Anglican Church to start any work among the Spanish speaking population.

SAMS leaders took advantage of any chance to make clear the paucity of their support. We see this concern, for instance, when they recounted of the birth of EUSA:

For the information of our readers we may say that the EUSA is a federation of small missions, and is what is called "An Interdenominational Society". A few influential Churchmen support its claims, but its workers are, as far as we know, all Non-conformists. We rejoice that Nonconformity is doing more for South America.⁷⁶

7. Evangelisation as an asset to colonial expansion

The history of the expansion of Christianity to non-Christian cultures, whether by the Roman Catholic or Protestant Churches was bound up with the exploitation of the Third World by the colonial powers. During the colonial period of Asia, Africa and Latin America it was commonplace to see European missionary societies justifying the military and commercial interests of their countries. Latin America knew well what the saying "the sword and the Bible arrived together" meant in the hands of the Spanish conquerors. For more than four centuries the aborigines and their cultures were subjected to very cruel treatment that decimated the population and extracted much of the natural resources of the continent. The rebellion of the colonies against Spain in the nineteenth century brought to an end that stage of the colonial process. After this, Latin America entered a era of neo-colonialism in which is seen once more the use of Christianity as a weapon of military and financial exploitation. The difference in this new process was that the power of Spain in Latin America was replaced by that of other outside powers. The Protestant religion now became the new religious instrument to legitimatise the interest of the new powers, particularly that of the United States. The colonial trilogy was now composed of the trader, the soldier, and the missionary. Each part of this trilogy played its part. As Anderson said:

The progress made in special missionary explorations. These

have been found to the advantageous occupation of an unevangelised country of missions. A mercantile house sends a man to explore for it who is skilled in trade; the warrior sends a soldier; the missionary society sends a missionary. There is a great deal in the point of view. Our traveller must have the eye, the ear, the heart of a missionary. Lion-hunters would not answer our purpose in Africa; nor would the members of the London Anthropological Society...That to which I would call special attention is, the extent to which this work of Missionary Exploration has been carried.⁷⁷

The advocates of the Protestant evangelisation of Latin America looked on this cause as good to support in so far as it made for colonial expansion. The missionaries argued that the presence of Protestant work in Patagonia, which was the area that originally captured the attention of the founders of SAMS, would help the colonial interests because one of its prime effects would be to dampen, if not to eliminate the wickedness of the population. This in turn would help to eliminate the casualties of navigation in that vital geographical area for the export and import of British goods.

The strength of this argument was that the aborigines always tried to reject the colonial presence in their region. In view of that danger, missionaries offered themselves to make their contribution against what they considered a real menace. This can be seen in Dr. Hamilton's memoirs of Richard William, where he observes: "In such a dangerous navigation, SAMS says, we need not say what casualties are likely to occur, but woe betide the ship's company which is thrown into the hands of these savages!".⁷⁸

Evangelisation, from a military point of view, is presented as a

legitimate enterprise, which could help to overcome the incapacity of the government to prevent the Aborigines from attacking the military and commercial ships. Missionaries stressed this argument by telling of manifold attacks that crews underwent because of inability to control the offenders. They emphasised that the missionary effort could do, in a cheaper and more effective way, what the government had failed to do. As we see in this statement of Richard William:

And it is only five or six years ago when the Captain and crew of the brig Avon were murdered by the same barbarians...And even although the governments of England and America should send war steamers to the station, they cannot be ubiquitous; and, on the coercive system, nothing short of an extirpation of the wretched natives can secure the castaway from the knife of the cannibal. HOW MUCH BETTER- HOW MUCH MORE WORTHY OF A CHRISTIAN COUNTRY, AND HOW MUCH CHEAPER- TO RECLAIM AND CIVILISE THEM! ⁷⁹

In line with this, the advocates of SAMS did not see anything wrong in linking their task with the colonial business of Great Britain in Latin America, and so they themselves also valued their work in Patagonia as a kind of colonial station which brought security "for the merchant and whaler depots of provisions and refitting stations, and the assistance of clever mechanics, where formerly the war-club was the only welcome".⁸⁰

This relationship between Protestant work and colonial expansion was not something exclusive to the work of SAMS. It had been present since the outset of the largest missionary societies, and expressed in the earliest missionary efforts.

Church leaders spoke proudly of the effectiveness of the Protestant cause to deter social unrest. In the London Conference of 1888, North American missionaries used this argument with regard to the struggle that their government had with the Indians. Far from criticising their government, the missionaries looked on the Protestant cause among Indians as the only way their government could win that battle, or the only way to draw them to civilisation.

At this conference, to enlarge on the failure of the Government efforts, the missionaries quoted figures of the cost of the war against the Indians. According to their information \$500.000.000 had been spent. Every Indian who had been shot down by the troops represented an expenditure of \$100.000.⁸¹ Presenting these figures, the missionaries asserted that Christianity would get better results for their government, if it would just support their work with a small part of the money it was investing in their military actions. The Conference also stressed the influence of Protestant work as a decisive factor in controlling the resistance of the colonies to the social effects of colonialism. They quoted positive results which had come about from some governments becoming more interested in supporting missionary activities:

The Dutch government has acted very consistently indeed by giving full attention to these things by sending a very learned and able man, Dr. Snouck Hourgronge, to India, in order to study the growth and general condition of Islam there. And what does this gentleman think about the dangers that might rise out of Islam to the Dutch government? He sums up his opinion in these words: We are sitting in India upon a barrel

of gunpowder, the spark only is wanting, and up we go in the air". I do not know how far those things, and the considerations necessarily prompted by them, have influenced the resolutions of the Dutch Government, but this is obvious, that it has done more than formerly for the growth of Christianity within its dominion...It is very gratifying indeed, to note how the number of Missionaries has increased within the last ten years.⁸²

On the other hand the involvement of the colonial power in the propagation of Christianity was seen at times as a way of expiating her for the wrongs done to the nations under her control. Sir William Wilson Hunter put forward this idea in his opening speech:

Before the last century closed, missionary effort commenced its beneficent work. The political conscience of England had awakened to the wrong that was being done in the name of the nation; and with the awakening of the political conscience, the Christian conscience of England also awoke. At that time Missionary impulse was, and it has ever since been associated with the national resolve to do what is right to peoples who have been committed to our care. I recognise in missionary work a great expiation for the wrong which the white man has done to the dark man in the past; and recognise also, a pledge of national right-doing in the future.

83

Frederick Crowe, who pioneered Protestantism in Guatemala in 1850, was thinking along the same lines when he referred to the millennial anniversary which the Anglo-Saxon Empire would celebrate in October 1849. For Crowe it was a time for deep reflection on "questions connected with the character of our rule, and the nature of our responsibilities". In that context of possible wrong-doing he talked about the promotion of Christian values in the dominated areas:

Well it would be for Britain if her statesmen could now see as they are seen, and feel for themselves for the numerous tribes and nations which are more or less affected by their

policy, or subjected to their sway. But whatever may be their infatuated blindness and indifference, individual Christians will be found, who, alive to our true interests and responsibilities, as the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus, will endeavour, by prayer and action - by prayerful efforts and effectual prayers- to carry the cross of Christ wherever the Anglo-Saxon Empire has extended, and far beyond those bounds. It is upon such that we would urge the duty, and with such we plead, as a powerful motive, our national sins and violence to others, and to Central America in particular.

84

The idea of Protestant missions as an asset for colonialism was well expressed in North America by missionary leaders. They interpreted the end of the Spanish-American War as the right time to promote Protestantism in Latin America. Protestants accepted neocolonialism not only for the sake of the religious opportunities, but fundamentally for the expansion of North American virtues per se.

North American Protestant missionary leaders J.R Mott, Robert Speer, and Samuel G. Inman, who later will be among the foremost advocates of the creation of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America (Hereafter the CCLA) and of Protestant expansion in Latin America, were indeed persuaded, especially after the Spanish American War, that the old vestiges of the Spanish presence should be replaced by Anglo-Saxon values. Though they showed, at times, grave doubts about some of dangers of North American Imperialism, their conviction was that the expansion of Capitalism had more advantages than unfavourable effects on Latin American countries. Besides, big nations could not avoid their duty of looking after the security of the world. Hence they made their own, the argument of their statesmen



that the expansion and intervention in foreign affairs was simply a matter of course.

Egged on by the euphoric atmosphere created by the North American victory over Spain in 1898, which raised the United States to a world power, Speer, in 1904, advocated for his country the principle of "world police". This ideology was in essence the motive which led the United States to intervene and invade militarily Latin American countries:

Again, the civilized nations are beginning to perceive that they do have a duty, which is often contemptuously spoken of, to police the world...The civilized nations have a right to go back of the mere forms of procedure in non-civilized lands and to secure the rights denied in those lands. Indeed, it is their duty to do so and in the interest of trade they are constantly doing so. To imply that they have not the right and duty is to misconceive the fiduciary character of civilization.⁸⁵

The ideology of "manifest destiny" would have been meaningless without this religious rationale. Latin America will again witness the sword and Christianity going hand to hand. The way in which Protestant missions reported the military interventions of the United States in Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines, showed the intertwined relationship between the political and financial interests on the one hand, and the religious opportunities, on the other. Understanding that this subject could be the object of particular research, we will give some glimpses of how Protestants understood this.

The United States intervention in Cuba which led to its

confrontation with Spain in 1898 was seen as being brought about by the Cubans' suffering under the cruel Spanish rule. Hence Cubans and North Americans should have little trouble in understanding this. Speer described this by saying that North American people "could no longer hold their hands and see such iniquity at their doors." "How they could justify", says Speer, "such indignation while tolerating atrocities almost as great at their own threshold?".⁸⁶

Yet as soon as the Spanish gave up their old colonial privileges, the Cuban population began to realise that the motivation of the United States had been part of a plan to secure its control of the Caribbean. This triggered off a strong resistance movement to force the United States to leave the country to allow its own people to rule. Patriotic Cubans who had fought the Spanish rule were now committed to facing the new "conquistador". Protestant mission leaders realising the great opportunity that North American rule offered for the expansion of Protestantism, openly sided with those who advocated a permanent North American occupation in Cuba. They stressed that the simple liberation of the country from Spain was no guarantee that progress and development would follow. Cultural heritage and especially "Spanish morality" had now to be addressed, and this only could be faced with a permanent North American presence in the region. So the North American presence is presented only as an initial step towards the independence of the nation. Within this, the Protestant missions would carry out the other vital step,

namely, the moralisation of the country. The fact that Cuba, with the help of North America, had thrown off the Spanish yoke brought, as Lester Geo, Superintendent of Wesleyan Missions, explained in 1900 "a new lease of life with every opportunity to make progress under civil liberty and Christian instruction."⁸⁷ From this point of view all anti-North Americanism in Latin America would be rejected by Protestant leaders.

An example of these leaders was Milton Greene, of the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions. In 1907, he wrote several articles in the "Missionary Review of the World" in which he interpreted the nature of anti North American opposition in Cuba. His article "What is the matter with Cuba?" reflected the gist of Protestant understanding on the goodness of military occupation in Latin America. He saw the military intervention as the only "solution of the vexing problem" namely, "the revolutionary ulcer." This problem, in his view, indicated that the old Spanish regime had not disappeared at all. The origin of the revolutionary movement found explanation in "the moral condition of people as the result of four hundred years of Spanish domination".⁸⁸ So this was enough evidence for Protestants to argue that the liberation of Cuba from Spanish control was in itself incomplete, until the United States replaced its social institutions. Here Protestant missions had a great role to play, because, as Green made out in "What Americans have done in Cuba" the bottomline of the crisis in Cuba was essentially moral. Only the introduction of a new religious

system, led by Protestantism, could remedy old Cuban vices such as "intellectual stagnation" with the lack of "intellectual initiative, of industrial conscience and personal integrity, and of domestic purity and mutual confidence in social morality.⁸⁹

With regard to Puerto Rico, Protestant Missions were still more straightforward in acknowledging the virtues of the neo-colonization. This was because of the supposed legality of the occupation of the island. North Americans had not found there, unlike in Cuba, any strong resistance. When speaking of Puerto Rico as a mission field H.K. Carroll, in 1900, called it "virgin soil", United States's soil, which will become "a winter resort and a fruit garden like Florida." He saw as "interesting " that Puerto Ricans "in the civil government law just enacted by Congress, will, undoubtedly become, in fact and in form, citizens of the United States, like the Spanish populations in New Mexico and Arizona.⁹⁰

Puerto Rico is an interesting case that brings into question the argument of Protestants that their interest in Latin America was to help to help Christianise neglected aborigines, rather than to oppose the work of the Roman Catholic Church. From the beginning Protestant missionary leaders acknowledged that Puerto Rico was a Christian country, where practically all the aborigines had been exterminated. H.K. Carroll clearly pointed out, in the Foreign Missions Conference, 1901, that in Puerto Rico "in the main the population is nominally Christian." "This fact, he went on, "does not, however, very

greatly simplify the problem of the evangelization of these groups.⁹¹

As Greene had argued in the case of Cuba, so Speer presented the military occupation of Puerto Rico as of great benefit:

Where there was tyranny, stagnation, persecution, ignorance, and superstition, the spirit of American freedom and Protestant Christianity are now bringing in the new and different order which Spain and Rome have always opposed, but under which, the Roman Catholic Church is uplifted and purified in spite of herself. The transformation of Porto Rico has been even greater; for there American institutions have had more immediate play and have flourished in the certainty of American political jurisdiction.⁹²

Charles Thompson extolled the progress that the occupation of Puerto Rico had meant, mentioning the railroads, the opening up of good roads, and the introduction of better methods of agriculture.⁹³

The Protestant interpretation regarding the Philippines was the same as that applied to Latin American countries. This was because the Philippines was also under the Spanish crown, and especially, because the origin of North American influence there was also an outcome of the Spanish-American War. John Barret, speaking in the Eighth Foreign Mission Conference, in 1901, said that the Philippines, as far as the Protestant missions was concerned, had no par in the world. He described it as "the most interesting and most fruitful opportunity for missionary work." A country 90 per cent Christian, but yet without the idea of "developing respect for the character of Christ". As the CCLA will later argue for Latin America, Barret feared that, in the Philippines, their vast population "dissatisfied with the conditions that existed before, will become agnostic, unless the great evangelical

churches of the world will master the situation".⁹⁴ Robert Speer too, echoed the general feeling among Protestant leaders, who saw there a great opportunity, not only from a commercial point of view, but also from the missionary point of view:

With the acquisition of the Philippines, whether wisely or unwisely, the United States has assumed towards those countries the new and additional relation of a neighbour. The enormous development of the resources of the United States and the increased necessity for foreign markets have strengthened the reasons which have controlled its policy in the past, and the proximity of its new possessions, with their millions of inhabitants, has brought it nearer than ever in sympathy to these peoples and their governments...Let us discharge past debts and go forward doing present duty. Future destiny will be cared for by a greater Will than ours. No man can now foresee the changes which time has in store for us, for the world, and they build best for nation, for mankind and for God, who build with a faith void of injustice but void also of fear.⁹⁵

Speer and Mott interpreted the difficulties that protestant Christianity were facing in the Philippines as the same problems that the United States was facing. In his address to the Y.M.C.A. he expressed that he was mindful "of the many and baffling difficulties which confront the American government, the Christian Church, and our Association Movement in the Philippines".⁹⁶ So it is understandable that from this perspective there is no place for any substantial criticism of North American attitudes to their colonies. J.R.Mott, in explaining the importance of the Philippines as a field for Y.M.C.A work, was unable to see any wrong in the occupation of the Philippines. He considered himself among those peoples, who after having questioned the wisdom of the continuance of the occupation of

the Philippines, had now, after visiting the country "an entirely different opinion." He mentioned some of the virtues of the occupation:

Within less than ten years there has been built up a stable government -insular, provisional and municipal.... Ladronism, [thieving] the curse of the Islands, has been suppressed, and peace, order, and justice prevail...A sound gold standard currency has been given to the country and this is already exerting an influence in the Orient far beyond the Philippines. Millions of dollars have been invested in substantial material improvements, especially in Manila. Improved postal and telegraphic communications have been introduced, and railway and government road extension, and bridge building are in progress. The grave question of the friars' lands has been eliminated, and the power of arrogant ecclesiasticism and officialism has been broken.⁹⁷

North American Church historians like William Hogg and Pierce Beaver agreed that Protestant missions took advantage of the United States world power to further Protestantism in Latin America during the last half of the nineteenth century. For Beaver the ideology of "Manifest Destiny", encouraged both by the acquiring of overseas territories and the exertion of influence in international affairs was one of the great motives that inspired the North American foreign missionary. Many people, he said, "believed that God has raised up the new nation to play a decisive role in the winning of the world for Christ".⁹⁸

The Seventh Foreign Mission Conference of North America in 1898 had revealed how seriously Protestant missions were considering the need for the expansion of Protestantism in Latin American countries where the United States had recently gained control. In the

address of Arthur J. Brown, "The Occupation of Cuba, Porto Rico, and Philippines." he recalled a previous conference in which various missionary boards had determined to promote their work in these countries. He mentioned that after the Spanish American War seven boards were interested in missionary work in Cuba, four in Porto Rico and three in the Philippines".⁹⁹ He praised the spirit of coordination that missions had shown regarding the expansion of Protestantism in these three countries. "Before occupying a new field," said Brown, "the representatives of the various boards sat down to cordially plan the situation together, to pray over it, and to decide how men and money can be used to the very best advantage".¹⁰⁰ The resolutions of that previous conference showed the feelings that were moving Protestant missions to expand their work in Latin America, namely the call of God and patriotism:

It is the judgment of this conference that the political and military relations into which the United States has been so strangely forced with reference to Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippine Islands...involve certain moral and religious responsibilities - which are, perhaps, quite independent of the precise character of the political relationship which may hereafter be formed with them - and that the Christian people of America should immediately and prayerfully consider the duty of entering the doors which God in His providence is thus opening. We believe that this feeling represents the deep and solemn Christian patriotism of the country, and that support will be given to the boards for this purpose.¹⁰¹

In reacting to the report of Brown, W.R. Lumbuth expressed the urgency of the cause in the case of Cuba: The hour for Cuba's regeneration has come. We should lose no time in fully occupying this

field...I trust that we may move not only upon these lines in the Island of Cuba, but in Mexico and elsewhere...¹⁰²

However much was this interest of Protestant leaders in North America in the expansion of Protestantism in Latin America at the turn of the century, it is clear that their achievements were little. As the CCLA argued in later years, North American Protestantism before 1916, had not yet made their made up its mind on the religious importance of Latin America.

8 The importance of Evangelisation for commerce

SAMS leaders very early on realised that the religious argument alone was not enough to gain support for their mission. They always found in their audience scepticism about the idea of evangelising a region which was already under the influence of a Christian Church, albeit not Protestant. In this context the founders and directors of SAMS stressed the likely financial advantages that the Protestant cause in Latin America could bring to Britain. Therefore they did not spare efforts to attract support on commercial grounds. However it cannot be said that this argument was basically just a kind of tactic to draw support. They indeed believed that Protestant work represented a real material benefit to their nation.

In the concrete case of their interest in evangelising the population of Patagonia, SAMS argued that a campaign of evangelisation would bring commercial benefits for Britain. This is

why, as early as 1854, SAMS workers, such as Richard William, made it clear that if religion was in itself an insufficient motive, then the commercial importance of the Mission to Tierra del Fuego should be considered:

If there were no better reason" replied a worthy contributor to our Mission fund, "I should support you on this account alone, that the civilisation of the Fuegians and Patagonians would be a boom to England!... ¹⁰³

In this sense Protestant expansion differed little from that of the Roman Catholic Church which had been led to justify the interests of the Spanish Crown in Latin America. The financial usefulness of these lands to Britain rested on the fact that Protestant missions, like the Roman Catholic Church before, looked on the lands as the promised land that God had given them. This time Great Britain, as the new conquerors, was to fulfil God's purposes as can be implied from this statement of G.A. King, of SAM, expressed in 1909.

To need, one naturally adds opportunity. The South America Continent is so vast that those who work in it have been called the advantage, the blessing of an unlimited horizon....There is something great in an unlimited horizon....There are scriptural promises, and a Scriptural warning in regard to it. There was the promise of that view of an unlimited horizon when to Abraham it was given to possess the land on which his eyes looked, eastward and westward, and northward and southward. There is a warning when that same land is viewed by the representative of those who "entered not in because of unbelief."¹⁰⁴

G.A. King went on by asserting that the obtaining of material profit could be combined with the promotion of evangelism. The virginal material wealth was a projection of the spiritual needs of their

inhabitants:

But this land is a good land, and I venture to think that its characteristics, from a missionary point of view, answer to and are symbolised by its natural qualities of two of its great component States -The Argentine Republic and the United States of Brazil... The Great mineral wealth, the almost unknown mineral wealth of Brazil is a figure of the spiritual state of those who have been forced, for three hundred years, to conceal their real aspirations, and to suppress their true feelings on religious matters. As the one is capable of development by persistent labour, and by a commercial faith which spurns difficulties and derides impossibilities, so those concealed feelings may be brought out, and will be brought out when those people are brought face to face, little by little, it may be, with a real working, practical and transforming creed.¹⁰⁵

However the opportunity to possess the land implied, on the part of the owner, a great responsibility, which could be exercised, according to missionary interpretation, in so far as the owner looked after the religious needs of the population. In this sense the chairman of SAMS, Lord Bishop, implicitly declared, in 1914, that commercial colonisation is inadequate as long as it is not followed by a spiritual conquest:

If we consider that the South American continent offers in any sense an opening to our sons and our commerce, we have no right to accept that opening, given to us by providence, without showing our duty and loyalty to the very calling which God has given us in placing His Christianity in our land.¹⁰⁶

Protestant missions noted the difference between them and the prior Spanish conquest. As we have stated before, Protestant criticisms of the Spanish attitude to Latin America were founded on the fact that the Spanish Crown not only supported the propagation of a corrupt

version of Christianity, but also that they failed to conquer the poor spiritual values of the aborigines. In this, Spain was continuously an easy target to snipe at, as someone put it in SAMSM in 1914.

To these downtrodden people they had a responsibility. They had come into contact with some of the vices of European life. They had suffered wrong and oppression at the hands of the white man, and it would be an amazing disgrace if they in England were content with our commercial contact with these people, and left their spiritual interests unnoticed and disregarded.¹⁰⁷

Having this in mind, the leaders of missionary societies continually reminded the British Government not to follow the model of Spain, because, otherwise, she could lose her privileges as an imperial power. At the same time SAMS, for instance, knowing that using "paganism" with regard to the aborigines would fail to convince those sceptical of their programme, tried to achieve their objective by stirring up the imperialist ambitions of the people in power. Thus SAMS leaders made constant references to the financial advantages of Latin American evangelisation.

It can be said that British missionaries gave twofold service to their country: Firstly, making known the material resources of Latin America and consequently awakening people to the possibilities of the likely success of the investment of British capital in the region; and secondly, by trying to support the presence of the colonisers. This is inferred in a passage of the sermon that Rev. John Marsh gave at the annual conference of SAMS, in 1864. He said : "the recent opening of the magnificent River Amazon to the commerce of all nations, is

calling us not to lag behind, but with the Gospel of Christ to accompany the many who are for other purposes pressing forward.¹⁰⁸

The necessity of combining spiritual needs with commercial prosperity of the people among whom they were working was emphasised by missionaries. Justification of the evangelisation of Latin America can be seen in the words of one SAMS director at the annual meeting in 1909:

I fancy that the work in what are known as the dark Latin lands is unpopular in this country because it is misunderstood. Work in these lands is not directed towards those who worship devoutly, if mistakenly, as I have seen a crowd of women doing in a great church in Buenos Aires...But the real thing in the Latin lands that has to be faced is not so much the errors of any church, as the spirit of atheism and materialism in which is seen, even by the most casual visitor, to be rampant there; which is naturally promoted in places where the resources, both agricultural and mineral, are so abundant, where wealth is so accumulated in such vast amounts, and where every prospect pleases. ¹⁰⁹

It is beyond doubt that SAMS leaders themselves considered that their religious tasks had clear financial implications. In the moderator's view, SAMS work should be assessed by considering "the results of simple, preserving, faithful work in its bearing on the civilisation of savage races; and from a commercial point of view as well as from a Christian point".¹¹⁰

Latin America in Protestant eyes would be the solution to many problems that Great Britain was experiencing, for example that of over-population and the need of industrial development to take over important commercial markets. The continent could offer Britain an

opportunity to enlarge her presence in the region. BFBS, quoting a reference from the London Outlook newspaper, interprets what South America could mean commercially to Great Britain:

What is South America? It is something more than a land of revolutions....It is the last and most tempting field for the reception of overcrowded Europe. Colossal, sparsely populated, much of it almost unexplored, habitable by Caucasians, its interior easily accessible by water, its soil of inexhaustible fertility, its mineral wealthy barely tapped - such is the prize that is dangled before a world whose ceaseless endeavour is to lower the social pressure by emigration, and secure for her traders easy access to fresh and, above all, exclusive markets.¹¹¹

Barbrooke Grubb, of SAMS, conveyed the view that the achievements of British companies were related to the work of the missionary society. He saw that his work was partly responsible for "the indirect increase of trade and wealth through the enhanced value of land, the augmented trade in hides, and the importation of goods for the use of workmen, not to mention the demand for vast quantities of wire for fencing in the large ranches.¹¹² He also in 1911 stated thus:

I remember the time when a knife, an axe, a pair of scissors, a hoe, an iron pot or a kettle were so seldom possessed by an Indian that they created deep interest, and formed the subject of earnest conversation, But now these articles are in the hands of almost every Indian far and wide, most of them bearing English trade-markets. Mosquito-nets of calico, coloured handkerchiefs, and clothing were unknown; whereas now, wherever the Mission influence has spread, an Indian considers himself badly off if he does not at least own a mosquito-net. The Manchester trade-marks are now familiar to these people.¹¹³

Frederick Crowe had said the same about Central America in 1850, stressing that in addition to the business of material goods, the

companies were interested in introducing Bibles:

Although, on the whole, there is but little contrast in the moral influence exerted by the rival emporiums, upon the people in whose markets they trafficked, it will be seen further in that there is in one respect, at least, a notable exception. One of the commercial houses in Belize was foremost in seeking the spiritual enlightenment of the benighted inhabitants of the interior. Among chests of Birmingham muskets and bayonets, Sheffield knives, destined to be used as poniards, and, Manchester dolls, of which Virgin Mary and Saints, or a kind of households gods are frequently made, they began to introduce cases of Spanish Bibles and other books, calculated to enlighten the simple and counteract the intellectual poison which Spanish and French traders had already imported in the infidel literature of the period, boxes of which, it is not unlikely, travelled side by side with the other containing this their only effectual antidote.¹¹⁴

SAMS looked on its contribution to the commercial exploitation of the regions where they had a certain hold, as an action that should be rewarded through the investment of money in the cause of evangelisation. According to them, evangelisation is a necessary complement to material investment, so at the same time they emphasized the responsibility that commerce had with regard to the promotion of missions:

Another large South American Company, founded by one of the leading merchants of Paraguay, has also been located in our vicinity. The founder acknowledged, in the newspaper of the Republic, that had it not been for the civilising influence of the Anglican Mission, he could not possibly have ventured upon such an undertaking... It is worthy of note that the best progress made by Europeans into the interior has been along Mission routes. Yet how often we hear the remark that money cannot be spared for such a Mission as this, since there is so much poverty at home; and here we find a handful of men opening up a new field to English enterprise and providing employment for the mother country.¹¹⁵

Indeed Protestant missionaries realised the asset that Protestant work was for colonial and commercial interests of their countries. They began to make known to what extent profits from that, should be devoted to the Protestant cause in the mission field, constantly complaining that businessmen and companies functioning in the same field were not contributing to the propagation of the gospel. At the missionary conference in London 1888, a delegate said that "in spite of the fact that Missions had been very beneficial to commerce, I am sorry that the benefits are not altogether reciprocal".¹¹⁶

In calling for recognition of a reciprocal connection between commerce and missions, this conference outlined the grounds on which they thought that commerce should be grateful for the pioneering work of the missionaries in several parts of the world:

What does commerce owe to Missions? Why, it owes everything. They have been most instrumental in opening up highways and byways of this country to trade. Has it been commerce first or missionaries first? Why, we know that in many cases the Missionaries have preceded the trader. They have opened up and made possible vast regions to commerce. And this fact is, I believe, thoroughly well recognized today. Thank God the connection between commerce and missions is not only theoretical; it is practical, and of everyday importance...And now, we are realising the fact, as we ought, that commerce and missions may cooperate and go together to repay to the world this debt which we certainly owe to it, but a debt which we owe to our Master still more.¹¹⁷

The thinking expressed in these conferences was the same as SAMS used about their work in Latin America: "wherever the missionary goes there our commerce extends together with

civilisation, they mutually follow the missionaries".¹¹⁸ Recognising this, missionaries had asked from the beginning the same question of those who were making great profit in Latin America. To what extent were the companies willing to recognise the contribution of Protestantism to their operations and so willing to encourage the evangelisation of the people from whom they were making profit? To say this, the missionary had to know of the actual success of their fellow citizens' business. And in indeed they were clearly aware of that, and could quote figures:

Putting the average dividend on the above total as low as 2 per cent; it gives an annual revenue of no less than £.100.000.000.. What percentage of this immense sum is devoted by its recipients to the spiritual welfare of the lands and people where those dividends are earned?... Interest received last year was £25.437.030.¹¹⁹

In the Panama Congress(1916) this complaint was again presented. Capital investment in Latin America was gaining large profits from a region that was receiving little spiritual aid in return. On this occasion The author of the lecture "The Significance of Latin America to the life of the World" put it thus:

The commercial interest in Latin America on the part of foreign nations is further shown by the money invested. it is estimated that the United States has \$1,000,000.000 employed in Mexico, and that Great Britain, Germany and France are not far behind...According to the South American Journal, Great Britain has \$3,600,000,000 invested in South America, and in 1909 the dividends from South America investments were \$125,000,000...Latin America produces the raw material that the rest of the world needs, and in exchange receives manufactured articles, constituting a reciprocal trade. ¹²⁰

It was said in the Panama Congress that the profit that was being gained by British investments in this continent was enough to arouse the conscience of wealthy laymen to responsibility: "Great Britain is receiving millions in dividends from South America, and yet is doing next to nothing in return".¹²¹

In Panama SAMS delegates acknowledged their inability to alone meet the needs of Latin America as a field of mission. In doing so they accepted as necessary for their work the participation of American churches and consequently the presence of American business in the region, as though it was unthinkable to see one factor apart from the other. Such cooperation, they said, would help us in reaching and influencing some of the commercial companies connected with the United States who have interest in this region. They stressed, however, "that their priority and first aim was to plant a pure Christianity among the people".¹²²

To sum up, missions in their arguments for the expansion of Protestantism in Latin America, justified it, not only on the ground of religious needs but also on those of commerce.

9. Christianity and Civilisation

Another relationship that is important to take into account when we are studying Latin America as a land of mission is that established by the missions between Christianity and civilisation. In this missions like SAMS were also following the stream of the main

European missionary societies. This issue appeared in most of the missionary conferences. There is enough ground for thinking that Christianity and civilisation can be looked on as two sides of the same thing . On other hand this symbiosis had clear financial implications, because civilisation meant basically the assumption of Western standards of living. The civilising of the cultures that were going to be affected by the propagation of Christianity was interpreted in missionary intelligence as the way in which they could adapt to Western commercial and social life.

Missionaries themselves boasted that their work in South America had achieved, against all expectations, the civilising of the aborigines. The proof of this was that missionary work had influenced the aborigines - who were looked upon as being beyond the reach of modern life - to be clothed, to behave and to establish civilised homes.¹²³

Indians were preached a "cultural gospel" in which conversion meant "occidentalization." This explains the argument that the civilization implied in the Christian message "made people useful members of society".¹²⁴ John Hay, former worker of SAMS, and who later founded "the Inland South-America Missionary Union" spoke of the transition "from savage to citizen" that Paraguayan Indian experienced, once converted.¹²⁵

In referring to the success that SAMS was having in civilising Paraguayan Indians, G. Wilson drew attention to the fact that

conversion to Protestantism was widening the gap between "heathenism" and Christianity" Yet the difference was largely in the way Indians sought to copy the customs of missionaries, especially the way of dressing:

The former grew steadily more Europeanized, and this marked the difference between them and the latter more decisively. (Probably this is related to the way of dressing, (suit, ties, shoes, etc; and the consumption of the clothe that British sent to them. They tried to dress like the missionary, and also because missionaries believed that gave them authority among them, especially when some of them became readers or directors of the worship.¹²⁶

This link between Christianity and Civilisation is something seen in the course of the history of missions. Missionaries used to legitimise their work on the grounds of the contribution they were making to the civilising of the world. In that sense we need not be surprised at the speech of the President of the Chamber of Commerce of New York, Morris K. Jesup who at the Missionary Conference there in 1900, acknowledged and praised the contribution that Missions had made to the expansion of civilisation:

I am glad of the opportunity to offer without stint my tribute of praise and respect to the missionary effort which has wrought such wonderful triumphs for civilisation. Wielding the sword of the Spirit, they have conquered ignorance and prejudice. They have been among the pioneers of civilisation. They have illuminated the darkness of idolatry and superstition with the light of intelligence and truth....They have inculcated industry and taught the various trades....¹²⁷

The missionaries of SAMS were unequivocally clear in identifying the expansion of Christian principles in South America

with the promotion of Western commercial and social values. Therefore it was by no means strange that they looked on the introduction of the social manners of their own culture as part of their work.

When SAMS first considered establishing, in the Falklands, a kind of base for the superintendence for their work in South America, they looked on the territory as an ideal place to stimulate European civilization along with, pure religious values. In 1854 Pakenham put it as follows:

Here natives from the continent and southern islands may be trained for introducing Christianity and its consequent, civilisation, among the native tribes. Here they can be brought to see, without the bewilderment which a visit to Europe occasions, Christian domestic life, and such inventions of European science and skill as they can appreciate and imitate...Now He who has given these islands into our hands, cannot be better served, in return for His goodness than by devoting a portion to this benevolent use....¹²⁸

However the foremost reason that led missions to see civilisation as evangelisation and vice-versa was the concept they had of the aborigine. The people whom they were going to evangelise were in their eyes no more than savages and barbarians. It was common for missionary reports to describe the local natives as most depraved people. Among other epithets SAMS described them as demon-possessed.

This perspective on the Aborigine was founded on three basic reasons that were not always explicitly recognised by the missionaries.

Firstly, the racism of the period regarded non-Western cultures as inferior. Missionaries, as children of their own culture, could not escape from this.

Secondly, the theology which missions had developed regarding non-Christian societies helped to create an image of them as pagans and lost ones. We have to remember that the people who decided to leave their comforts of home to go abroad, and to experience all kinds of limitations, were convinced that God had called them as His instruments to save those "lost" people. Thirdly, missionaries felt the need to convince home populations of the value of their work. The worse the aborigine was presented, the more possibilities the enterprise had of gaining supporters. The more the aborigine was depicted as evil, the more likelihood the missions had of getting financial aid. This is why in the early years of missionary work the population was described in the crudest terms possible. However as the work proceeded and missionaries began to know the people with whom they were working they started to change their outlook on aborigines. Missions began to realise that their way of understanding other cultures did not fit in with reality. Aborigines were described in a more positive light than was the case at the beginning of their work. Another reason for this was that the Mission had to show their supporters that their work was succeeding. In the beginning it was necessary for the leaders to show the existence of the lowest paganism in the region, but this argument could not be continued indefinitely. The supporters would call for

evidence to show that the mission work was succeeding in changing the "awful" reality that had led them to contribute to such a cause. Along with this, there was a growing need to maintain a missionary structure. The work reached a point at which the organisation became as important as the evangelistic needs of the mission field. This line of argument appeared clearly in the reports of both, the South American Missionary Society and the Central American Mission.

SAMS had a great deal of interest in demonstrating that it was succeeding in civilising the aborigine, as W. Bramley graphically described it in 1867:

The lowest type, perhaps, of savage human nature in the world, has been brought under the influence of the Gospel, which has proved in these degraded beings "the power of God unto salvation"... His condition was a disgrace to the religion and civilisation of Europe. The Fuegian savage, once possessed by the demons of cruelty, treachery, and blood-thirstiness, was now to be seen "clothed, and in his right mind".¹²⁹

Barbrooke Grubb accentuated the civilising of the aborigines as an achievement of the mission:

If we think of the savagery and barbarism in which they were found, and of the efforts to raise and develop them so perseveringly made during the last twenty years, in the face of their deep-rooted adherence to witchcraft and its attendant enormities; if we think of the amelioration of their lot which, under God's blessing, has followed, should not the further advancement of this people and their church be recognised as a noble object of Christian ambition.¹³⁰

SAMS had come into being at a time when there was a rampant racist perception of non-Western cultures, and the way they looked on the cultural values of the aborigines was in many ways similar to the

secular racism of their time. However their ideas and purposes in an important way differ from the current trends insofar as they thought that those "pagan" cultures could be transformed. They proudly asserted that, against what science had declared, they were gaining a foothold in South America. They conveyed, in a direct allusion to Charles Darwin that science was wrong because a race that had been condemned as "the missing link" could be elevated and Christianized".¹³¹

The founders of SAMS had followed closely the interest that Darwin had showed in Tierra del Fuego for the purposes of his scientific research. Indeed SAMS interest in the development of science moved independently of Darwin's work. This is shown in that one of their workers, Thomas Bridges, had received in 1884, on behalf of SAMS a presentation by the Museum Committee of the College of Surgeons "on the ground of their services to the Museum and to Science, in obtaining and transmitting the skeletons of natives of Fuegia".¹³²

SAMS asserted that Darwin when he first visited Tierra del Fuego was completely surprised by the lowly state of the aborigine and the awfulness of the environment. In 1859 SAMS cited his description of the land in these terms:

I continue slowly to advance for an hour along the broken and rocky banks, and was amply repaid by the grandeur of the scene. The gloomy depth of the ravines well accords with the universal signs of violence. On every side were lying irregular masses of rock and torn-up trees; other trees,

though still erect, were decayed to the heart, and ready to fall. The entangled mass of the thriving and the fallen reminded me of the forests within the tropics-yet there was a difference: for in these still solitudes, Death, instead of life, seemed the predominant spirit. The trees all belong to one kind, the *fagus betuloides*; for the number of other species of *Fagus* and of the Winter's Bark, is quite inconsiderable. This beech keeps its leaves throughout the year; but its foliage is of a peculiar brownish-green colour, with a tinge of yellow. As the whole landscape is thus coloured, it has a sombre, dull appearance; nor is it often enlivened by the rays of the sun.¹³³

Darwin not only ruled out any possibility of the Fuegians being transformed on behalf of science, but also dared to express the opinion that any missionary effort there would be in vain. However, according to SAMS, on seeing their work some decades later Darwin changed his view. The change was evident when he said: "I couldn't have believed that all the missionaries in the world could have made the Fuegians honest".¹³⁴ In fact SAMS reported several times that Darwin not only was acquainted of their work in South America, but had also become aware of their success. They were convinced that they had done what science considered impossible:

These facts speak as though the Christian missionary were the prophet of human life. Others judging the question from a quasi-scientific point of view, say there are certain races that you cannot raise. We say that we have done it, and we have done it because our faith is that God made men of one blood. We are linked together in the brotherhood by redemption...We have rescued people from degraded conditions to which science sometimes intended to doom them...We are all redeemed by one blood...We believe in the outpouring of one Spirit on all flesh.¹³⁵

The chairman of SAMS informed the annual meeting in 1882, that Darwin was so amazed at the success of the Mission in Tierra del

Fuego that he asked the Mission to grant him honorary membership.

He put it thus:

You know, however, that Mr. Charles Darwin wrote these words after having described what he had seen. "I have already told you that the success of the Tierra del Fuego Mission is most wonderful. It charms me, as I always dreaded utter failure. It is a grand success. I shall feel proud if your Committee will elect me an honorary member of such a society.¹³⁶

In 1889 Rev. E. Carr Glyn recounted that Charles Darwin became a donor of £5 to the funds of the society, and an annual subscriber until the end of his life.¹³⁷ It is difficult to accept that Darwin had much interest in the religious activities of SAMS or indeed of any religious organisation. Darwin was an agnostic, and his ideas aroused the anger of many churchmen. However it is clear that SAMS leaders felt proud that Darwin somehow showed interest in being part of their organisation.

They believed that the way of living of the Patagonia aborigines was not due to biological, or geographical reasons as some racist theories held, but was rather a reflection of the colonial legacy and of the bad influence of the Roman Catholic Church. As someone put it "it is not the climate, it is not the peculiarities of these aboriginal tribes. If we are to speak the honest truth we have had the baneful influence of four centuries of European ascendancy, and we have here the awful records of a Roman Catholicism of the most corrupt type ever known.¹³⁸

SAMS also turned down the idea that the aborigines were not

able to learn. In refuting this, someone said that the aborigines were even able to produce a genius such as Newton or Watt. However this only could come about from an encounter with Christianity.

Regeneration is the work of Jehovah alone, and can be nothing less than a new creation. Take a Fuegian savage, and place him beside a Brainard, a Henry Martyn, or a McCheyne; and say whether any school of philosophy, or any system of secular education could convert the one into the other? There is no reason to doubt that a Fuegian savage might become a Newton, a Priestly, a Watt, or an Arkwright. Mental capacity, of which he may not be the least deficient, and severe study, might elevate him to the highest form in science or art¹³⁹

Gardiner had expressed this same view years before he showed interest in South America. Page recounts that in New Guinea, Gardiner was impressed by the capacity to learn of the native people. This happened when he applied to a Dutch officer for a pass to preach there. Gardiner, in answering the officer who had said to him that he also should try to instruct "the monkey or the native of Papua" replied: "Monkey in appearance or not, being men in reality they are not incapable of being instructed, for they are included in our Saviour's command to preach the Gospel to every human being".¹⁴⁰ There is no doubt that missionaries distanced themselves from the racist theorists of the epoch, who believed that, as far as civilization was concerned, any work among aborigines was a lost cause. However modern aboriginal communities are not thankful for missionary work. The determination of missionaries to try to change their values and cultures has turned out, in the end, more harmful than the thinking of

the racists who advocated leaving them alone in their "savage" state.

10. Evangelisation helps to subdue the aborigines

The conditions under which the missionary societies worked were partly imposed by their own home governments, but mainly by the governments of the Latin American countries in which they worked. In this context we have to take into account that after their political independence from Spain, a new political class emerged in Latin America.

This new class which was known as the liberals, was strongly identified with European and North American political ideas. In fact many of these leaders had been educated in the universities of those continents. This new political class began to take control of the Latin American nations in the second half of the nineteenth century. In the religious sphere this is relevant because these governments were strongly opposed to religious control exercised solely by the Roman Catholic Church, which, in their view, was still longing for old colonial times. Therefore as soon they came into power they were ready to make every effort to facilitate the introduction of the Protestant religion. The aim was to modify the influence of the Roman Catholic Church on the population.

Our interest here is to focus on the alliance that SAMS had with some of these governments for the purpose of building such trust as would ensure the acceptance of their missionary work. Such an

alliance was forged in the context of the struggle of the Liberal governments to incorporate aborigines within the nation. Liberals received power through the participation of the aborigine population in the wars of liberation. However the new governments could not meet their aspirations. They, after centuries of suffering, trusted that the new governments would change the misery and poverty that colonial times had imposed on them, but the bourgeois origin of this new social stratum prevented them from understanding the real needs of this oppressed class. Once consolidated, the liberal governments decided, at all costs, to introduce modernity in terms of language, customs, and western technology . In this, they soon met resistance from the population.

The resistance took a special form with the aborigine people whom the liberals always looked as an obstacle to the development of their countries. Furthermore the liberal governments had, in areas surrounding the lands of the aborigines, promoted colonies of European and North American emigrants.

The British government had a vested interest in this. They wanted to reduce the problem of overpopulation at home by promoting emigration to these and other areas of the region. The aborigines never accepted this. They looked on the coming of the immigrants as a new attempt to deprive them of their land.

SAMS, like the government, looked on the aborigine as a troublemaker whom they could help to calm down in order to ease the

settling of the immigrants. They offered to extend the kind of liaison that they had already exercised with migrants from Liverpool. SAMS reflected this clearly in the chronicle of the annual meeting of 1854:

From my former letters you will pretty well gauge our relations with these, to me most interesting people; but one thing I do entreat the Committee to consider, which is, that upon our efforts, under God's blessing, the happiness of these tribes immensely depends. The case stands thus: The Government want to repeople the country, and develop its resources. To do this immigration is promoted to the utmost; but the Indian population is a disturbing element, and causes disquiet to the Colonists; for the Indians, jealous of the encroachment of strangers, make inroads on the newly settled districts, and even venture to attack in great numbers the older residents and proprietors of the provinces, thus the Indian question is a difficulty. It is expected that other great towns will follow the example thus set by Liverpool; and acting through the central Committee of the Society, their resources will be economised and their efforts regulated by harmony and system. It is gratifying to find that the movement has been set on foot by merchants engaged in the South American trade, on both east and west coasts.¹⁴¹

The Indians realised that the colonial process had not finished and that in this new era, the liberal governments were completing the work of the Spanish Crown in eliminating their habits and customs.

The new political leadership soon established a kind of "enlightened dictatorship" with more sophisticated methods to control and deny civil liberties. In this framework the activities of SAMS took place, and it is clear that they, naively or not, offered themselves to achieve what the government had been unable to do by force.

The missionary work in South America fitted into the political scheme of this continent in that missionaries shared the perspective of

the liberals . The missionary always believed that the solution to the "Indian Problem" was to civilise and incorporate them into the national life.

We hardly ever see on the part of missionary societies a consistent defence of Indian values, or Indian rights to the land. In this regard they became perfect pawns of the liberal dictators in South America. Both Mission and Government had the idea that as long as the aborigines were not civilised they constituted a danger to society. The difference is that one side used force, and the other peaceful means to pursue the same objective, that is, to deprive the Indians of their land.

The early experience of SAMS and their achievements in Tierra del Fuego was their card of introduction to other Latin American countries. And of course this was to the liking of the liberal governments, because the missionaries were outright in asserting that the Christian civilisation they were promoting would help to pacify the aborigine. Latin American political ministers were invited to attend their annual meetings so as to convince them that their ideas were part and parcel of the missionary strategy. In 1884 one of their meetings bore the title "Christian Civilisation, the Only True Method of Affecting the Subjugation and Improvement of Uncivilised Races". Lord Major said that the meeting was "to draw special attention to the remarkable and instructive work of the South America Missionary Society, over a period of twenty years, and its Southern Mission in

Tierra del Fuego as having prompted the best interests of humanity, of commerce and of International goodwill". Among those present were...His Excellence Senor Garcia, Minister of Argentina Republic.¹⁴²

The missionaries of SAMS felt pleased with themselves because of their achievements with the aborigine population in South America. In one of their annual meetings, a G.A. King, responding to the request of an Argentinean newspaper for more severe measures against the aborigines, on the ground that they were the "most savage of all the Indian tribes", described the situation thus:

I am very pleased to have had this paper handed to me before this meeting began, because I think we need say nothing more to recommend to you most heartily the success of our work in the Paraguayan Chaco. What the power of the Argentina Government and its army - they have a force of two hundred thousands men- has been unable to do we have done....¹⁴³

This was not mere theory. They had real evidence. The success that the missionaries of SAMS had achieved in Paraguay where they were working with the same aborigine people, was described thus by King:

In the Paraguayan Chaco you can travel by yourself with an Indian guide wherever you please amongst those people and they wouldn't harm you. The Indians of the Paraguayan Chaco bore quite as bad a name as ever the Toba Indians did- I know something of the Tobas - and they are not any worse than those others when we first went to them. ¹⁴⁴

The work of SAMS had reached such respect from and confidence of the South American governments that they had virtually turned the Mission into a kind of official agency which

represented the interests of the government among the aborigines.

Barbrooke Grubb tells us of the situation in Paraguay:

The Paraguayan Government have, for nearly eighteen years, officially recognised us as their representatives among the Indians, and have granted us all necessary powers. We have therefore been endeavouring gradually to educate the Indian in municipal Government, (to train them) in the duties required of them. Strict discipline is maintained on the station, and Indian observance of law and order is being rapidly consolidated.¹⁴⁵

The dream of SAMS was to make all the aborigine communities of Latin America their mission field. The good reputation that the Mission had with the Paraguayan Government became an excellent help to get into touch with other countries that had tried unsuccessfully to gain control over the aborigines. According to G.A. King Bolivia was one of these countries.

I wrote to the Bolivian Government last year, and approached the Bolivian Minister, and said "I am going home before very long, and I want to say what I should like to be able to say. What I should like is a big section of really good land in your country. We want to reach the Indians scattered over your country, and you can refer to the Paraguay Government as to what we have done in Paraguay."¹⁴⁶

In fact it seems that there was strong evidence of their success, because Bolivian soldiers, who knew well about aborigine resistance, in the end backed their petition. The report goes on by saying that as a result of the bargain: "after a short time they sent a few soldiers to examine our work, and they are quite satisfied, and told us we could begin when we liked. There is a good opening they say".¹⁴⁷

The attitude of governments toward the work of SAMS is logical if we see that the Mission had the same perception of the aborigines,

that is to say, that the only way they could survive was by integrating them into civilisation. The Mission always defended the scheme of reservations for aborigines that governments tried to impose. In missionary understanding the failure of this new pattern was because of the rebellious behaviour of the aborigines. Therefore they sided with the governments when the aborigines fought for their rights, as we can see in this statement of Barbrooke Grubb:

Treacherous attacks have been just made by a tribe of Toba Indians of the Chaco upon the small forts which Col. O'Donnell had constructed near the frontier of Salta, around which he intended to establish colonies of Indians, to give them land, and provide them with the means of cultivating it and of sustaining themselves and their families...The conduct of the Indians has, however, demonstrated the impracticability of this humanitarian scheme, and has destroyed the hope that it is possible by kindness and good treatment to redeem them from their savage mode of life, and to induce them to earn their own living by honest work and industry...¹⁴⁸

SAMS argued for the success of their work was successful more from the consequences it had for the people in power, than for the aborigines themselves. The aborigines were benefited only insofar as they came to know knew what the missions called a "purer" form of Christianity, and nothing more. It would seem that the achievement of the Mission was that the aborigines agreed to acquiesce to what the Government and landowners wanted them to be. In addition the Mission succeeded in turning them into an effective labour force for those who had taken away their land, as this report reveals :

Only ten years ago it would have been impossible for anyone to establish an estancia (cattle-ranch) in the interior. The wire

fences would have been cut and the cattle stolen and killed and it is highly probable that those tending them would have run great personal risk. Through the direct instrumentality of the Mission a large English Company, with its headquarters in London, has now been established at a point more than ten leagues in the interior, where they possess two hundred and fifty thousands acres of land, and employ Indians.¹⁴⁹

After the aborigines had been a constant trouble to the Government military forces, SAMS produced a real "miracle" in that they managed to organise a police force in the Paraguayan Chaco by selecting the best members of the church. The report says that this was done under the requirements of the Government:

Although in many respects military discipline might prove a great advantage to these people, and in return might be beneficial to the republic, yet the country is not sufficiently developed, nor are moral and other forces strong enough at present, to counteract the evils that would necessarily arise were Indians in any numbers admitted to the Army. Trained armed Indians, either as deserters or only disbanded in the country, would prove under present conditions rather a danger than a safeguard. The Indian police force connected with the Missions, which is the only one existing is, however a perfectly peaceful organisation. It exists, not because the Mission requires it, but because it is one of the educative developments, preparing the people to take up a full part in the duties and rights of citizens. It is thus in accordance with the requirements of the Government...It is needless to say that they have been selected from among the best and most reliable of our Christians.¹⁵⁰

SAMS was aware that their work, magnified or not, was indeed inspiring a new mentality, and consequently a new society among South American aborigines. Under their leadership new values could be seen in such facts as a virtually non-existent crime rate, a virtual end to infanticide, and increase in the birth rate, and the cessation of

serious diseases like small-pox and measles.¹⁵¹

Conclusion

Protestant historians had been inclined to see the absence of Protestantism in Latin America in the nineteenth century as a product of the religious restrictions that the Spanish inquisition had imposed on their colonies. Yet we have seen that this was not really the case. There were more powerful reasons that led Protestant missionary societies not to show interest in Latin America. European Protestant missions were caught up in the needs of the non-Christian countries in Africa and Asia. The leaders of these missions were impervious to the pressures of individuals who were convinced that Latin America, like Asia and Africa, needed and were ready to receive the influence of Protestantism. Besides this, the influence of the failure of Protestant work in Spain exerted was considerable. Finally, although the Monroe Doctrine could be seen as part of the background of British missionary disinterest in Latin America, the United States had not yet taken the region seriously, not only religiously and politically and financially as well. The outcome of the Spanish American War would provide the conditions which accelerated North American influence in Latin America.

Chapter II

Latin America as a Mission Field for Protestant Evangelization (The Continent of Opportunity)

Introduction:

Three subjects are dealt with in this chapter. Firstly these are attempts of Protestant missionaries to defend to their work in Latin America on the grounds of the failure of the Roman Catholic Church.

Protestant missionary societies found it easy to give reasons for their presence in non Christian countries in Africa and Asia. Their belief in the superiority and uniqueness of Christianity led them to depict Oriental religions as faulty religious expressions. The argument in Latin America obviously had to be different given that the Roman Catholic Church had a presence there of almost four hundred years. However important the Indians traditional religious customs were, Protestant missionaries could not argue that the influence non-Christian religions was not predominant.

Yet that does not mean that the Protestant discourse was altogether quite different from that used to advocate Protestant work in Africa and Asia. The arguments employed elsewhere against non Christian religions were now used to portray the Roman Catholic Church as an unfaithful expression of Christianity. Protestants argued not only that the Roman Catholic Church had failed in presenting the faith, but also that it had contaminated the beliefs of the aboriginal Indians. Therefore Protestantism was presented as the alternative

religion that would bring true Christianity to both Indians and Roman Catholics.

The second mayor subject theme of this chapter concerns the hegemonic : power that the United States had in the region after the Spanish American War, the control of the Panama Canal and the First World War. The main point here is that the expansion of Protestantism was closely intertwined with the geopolitical and commercial attention that the United States now gave to Latin America as a whole.

The third point, and linked with the second, is the description of Latin America by Protestant missionaries as a land rich in natural resources. It was thought that the more North American capital was invested in the region the greater was the prospect of the Protestant religion to gaining ground in Latin America. Protestants sincerely believed that North American investments in the region would eventually contribute to social and economic progress of the region. But they also feared the negative effects of a coming industrial revolution in Latin America which would challenge, as had happened in Europe and North America, all religious values. Protestant missionaries believed that they had a special mission to help to "Christianise" the impact of the Northern industrial capitalism on the region.

1. Indictment of the Official Religion

1.1. Failure of the Roman Catholic Church

In the first chapter it was argued that the main claim of those who opposed the presentation of Latin America as a protestant mission field was that this region had already been affected by Christianity through the influence of the Roman Catholic Church. Through the nineteenth century and into the first decade of this twentieth century British and North American Protestant missionary leaders largely accepted this view. Protestant missionaries already working in Latin America therefore spared no efforts to show that though the Roman Catholic Church had worked in Latin America for centuries, her achievements in terms of the propagation of Christian values had been meagre. They granted that Latin Americans had had a long historical contact with the Roman Catholic Church, but qualified this by asserting that Christianity and the Roman Catholic Church were two quite different things.

It was said that the time had come for Protestantism to seize its opportunity in the region. The time had come when Latin America must be affected by Protestant ideas. They argued strongly that though the Spanish conquest had brought Christianity to Latin America, Christianity had not gained a genuine commitment among the population. The Protestant missionaries who had arrived in the region, inspired more by individual motives rather than being part of a global strategy, asserted, again and again, that the Roman Catholic Church had not succeeded in introducing Christian values in Latin America.

Thomas Neely, a Methodist Bishop in South America, was one of those who held that the attempts of the Roman Catholic Church to disseminate Christianity had been a fiasco:

Romanism has had its opportunity in South America and has failed. Romanism has not enlightened South America. It has not elevated South America. It did not free South America politically. It has not freed people from superstition. It found South America idolatrous, and it has left the people image-worshippers.¹

Neely maintained that the a religious situation in Latin America could be compared to that in Africa and Asia. For him Latin American countries were as pagan as the non-Christian countries. Therefore he had no doubts that if Protestant missions should be sent to pagan lands, then they should go to Latin America. He pointed out that religious control did not amount to religious influence: "The Roman Catholic Church has not availed itself of its religious monopoly in Latin America. Though it has had the opportunity for centuries, she, said Neely, has utterly failed".² In the Panama Congress, it was claimed that Christianising in these countries was asserted that the Christianity that had taken root in Latin America was purely nominal in character. The Commission on Cooperation and Unity called it "a problem of a most delicate kind".³

Carlos Eduardo Pereira, a well known Brazilian Presbyterian leader, was among those Latin Americans who looked on the region as utterly neglected as far as the expansion of real Christianity was

concerned. Like most of his zealous Protestant contemporaries in Latin America, Pereira saw the religious condition of these countries with a good measure of *sensationalism*. For him Latin America was, religiously speaking, "a land of dry bones" whose hope was in bringing them to life by the open Bible and the message of the gospel.⁴

The nominal character of the Christianity was indeed the principal argument that the founders of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America (hereafter the CCLA) used forwarding the need for the extension of Protestantism into Latin America. Dr. Robert Speer was leading advocate for this view:

But all this work is disapproved on the ground that it is for Christian people, that we are invading territory already occupied by a sister Church. As we have already seen, the Protestant missions in South America are among nominally Christian people and we have examined the religious conditions among these people which forbid our leaving the field to the agency, which has been in control of it. But it will be well now, in closing, squarely to face the question of the legitimacy of foreign mission work among the nominal Christians of South America.⁵

Speer went even further, implying that there was virtually no Christianity at all in Latin America. He therefore maintained that any Protestant efforts in the region could not be accused of having a proselytising aim:

It is said that this is proselytism, our reply is that we abhor proselytism as much as any one, when that proselytism is the effort to win a man from one form of Christian faith to another, but the Latin American form of Christianity is so inadequate and misrepresentative that to preach the truth is not proselytism, but the Christian duty of North American

Christians, both Protestant and Catholic.⁶

1.2. Roman Catholic Church is no longer a power

In its attempts to demonstrate that the Roman Catholic Church had failed in Latin America, Protestant missionaries strove to prove that people had rejected. Protestants claimed that the Catholic priesthood did not have people's trust, and that it had lost influence and respect among them because of its poor moral state.⁷

This conviction led Protestant missions to think that Latin America could not be saved religiously, unless the control of the Roman Catholic Church there was broken. "Save South America" the title of a pamphlet issued by the Inland South America Missionary Union underlined this clearly by pointing out that the official church "was powerless to deliver".⁸

It is in this context that Protestants preferred to speak of the Roman Catholic Church as "a religion in South America and not the religion for South America", for, "Romanism has been weighed and found wanting".⁹ In the Panama Congress the crisis of the Roman Catholic Church was described thus:

Scientific candor based on indisputable testimony from both Roman Catholic and Protestant sources compels the statement that in the Roman Church, Latin America has inherited an institution which, though still influential, is rapidly declining in power. With notable exceptions, its priesthood is discredited by the thinking classes. Its moral life is weak and its spiritual witness faint. At the present time it is giving the people neither the Bible, nor the Gospel, nor the intellectual guidance, nor the moral dynamic, nor the social

uplift which they need. It is weighted with medievalism and other non-Christian accretions...¹⁰

The discrediting of the Roman Catholic Church was indeed seen as the way to introduce the religious competition that Protestantism desire in Latin America, and the ground for the belief that the official church must give way to Protestantism.

The Protestant conferences that took place in Latin America in 1917, following the Panama Congress, continued to argue that the Roman Catholic Church could not deliver. In the meeting in Chile, W.H. Planes, in summing up the general mood among Protestants, said that the Roman catholic Church was lacking the spirituality to carry society "up the steep ascent to higher planes of life".¹¹ On this same line, Harlam P. Beach, of Yale University, ruled out that the traditional Christianity was able to meet people's expectations, or "do for these republics what their inhabitants need to see accomplished."¹²

1.3. Roman Catholic faith has been contaminated

It is important to note that Protestant criticisms of the Roman Catholic Church were not only based on her failure to provide for the people's spiritual welfare in Latin America, but also on the damage that Latin Americans, and especially Indian values, had done to Roman Catholicism in the region. The incompetence of traditional Christianity was illustrated on the one hand by the social and moral conditions of the Indians in Latin America, and, on the other hand, by

the moral conditions of the Church itself. British Anglican Bishop, Edward Every, who supervised the work of the South American Missionary Society from the beginning of this century, argued that Roman Catholicism had prove unable to rid the Indians of all their "superstitions". Every saw the continuation of old Indian religious practices as a distinct indication that the official Roman Catholic Church was not exerting any positive influence. Although in contact with Roman Catholic clergy, the Indians "were absolutely devoid of any idea of the Lord Jesus of Christianity".¹³ Further many Protestants believed that Roman Catholic priests did not press hard enough to get Indians to abandon their traditions, and they had allowed Indian practices to mingle with Roman Catholic teachings. Protestants believed that the worst that could happen to Christian Churches was for them to absorb Indian traditions. An example of this criticism can be found in a report was expressed in a Report of the Peruvian Methodist Church on the situation of the Qechua Indians. It drew attention to the fact that the Roman Catholic Church had not only been unable to check witchcraft, but had allowed it to invade the dominion of the faith of the Roman Catholic Church.¹⁴ In this same context J.H. McLean, Presbyterian missionary, believed that among other many mistakes, the Roman Catholic Church had been "dragged down by the masses":

Nothing less than the adequacy of the Son of God with power

could have fulfilled the demands imposed upon the Roman Catholic Church after the Conquest. The record might have been a different one had the Church of the sixteenth century in Spain been a body that cherished the truth of the living Christ, and, constrained by his Spirit, sought to translate it into life on a new continent. But the Spanish Church was a proselyting organization which sought to make conformists rather than converts...Her standards were not the teaching and example of Christ but the fair average of human morality...By the law of spiritual gravitation she was dragged down by the masses she failed to uplift.¹⁵

Christianity and not Indian culture was portrayed as the loser in this alleged exchange of values between Christianity and Indian cultures. Protestants, obviously, blamed the Roman Catholic Church for this, on the ground that the priesthood they, and not the Indians, understood the importance of the pure Christian message.

Protestant missionaries also maintained that the morals of Roman Catholic leaders were not often no better than those of the Indians. Neely for example asserted that a "wild Indian was more moral than the Indian who had come under the control of the Roman Church".¹⁷

1.4. View on Latin Americans as pagans

The other argument that was brought forward for the need of Protestant work in Latin America was a sense of duty to alleviate the sufferings of Latin Americans. While North Americans enjoyed much light and privilege, Latin America was "draped in sorrow and bound with fetters of spiritual slavery".¹⁷ The North American Methodist missionary, George Winton, depicted Latin America as "a wounded

and needy neighbour" who challenged the United States to act as good neighbour, for, "Latin America is lying beside our way".¹⁸ In Speer's view it was both the right and the duty of true Christians in the United States "to give sympathy and help to the aspiring people of South America, who are wrestling with great problems, and who deserve in their wrestling the good-will and practical aid of all friendly men."¹⁹ Speer thought that North Americans were not Christian if they did not carry Protestantism to South America.²⁰

For the most part, however, concern for the people of Latin America focused on questions of their moral character. Latin America was regarded as part of what Protestant missions metaphorically used to call "dark areas", meaning by that not its largely non-white population, but rather its moral character. This is the connotation given, at first sight, by the black map of Latin America on the cover of Lucy Guinness' The neglected Continent (1895).

Latin America was described for Protestant missionary purposes as a region made up of morally degraded people, or even of an amoral people. Indeed Latin America was not the only place considered that way. This becomes clear when Protestant missionaries moved to other mission fields outside the region. This is the case, for instance, of Albert Ross of the Central American Mission(hereafter CAM) who arrived in Nicaragua at the end of the nineteenth century, but moved to the Philippines. In spite of the fact that he was now working in a

different region, his view of the Philippines was the same that he had on Central Americans. In quoting the words of an American consul, Ross thought that people from the Philippines were not "immoral but amoral, for they did not have any morals".²¹ This was the image that Protestant missions gave of Latin America until well into this century.

Homer C. Stuntz, Methodist missionary, was certain that the North American delegates to Panama Congress, came away convinced that Latin America was "just as dark as it was represented by missionaries".²² Edward Every spoke of the patience that Protestant workers must have in a region where "there was nothing but savage heathenism, without a ray of spiritual light of the most obscure".²³

This alleged moral depravity of Latin America was openly used to counteract those who believed that Protestantism was not necessary there, as Latin America was a Christian continent. Obviously Protestants missions did not accept that view.

Some accepted that Latin America could not be classified as a non-Christian region, yet they believed that it had all the features that had made Western Protestants support evangelization in non-Christian countries.

This impression was expressed in the sketch of mission work made by Mary Potter, of the Central Committee of the United Study of Missions, in 1909. Though she indeed accepted that these countries were not "heathen lands", she justified a Protestant presence there,

because people were "making many mistakes about God". The mistakes were at a theological but much more at an ethical and moral level.

Potter combined her criticism of Roman Catholic practices with contempt for morality of the people in Latin America. The problems in these countries were, on the one hand, the fondness of people for the Virgin Mary and for religious images and, on the other hand, that they were neither "truthful nor honest".²⁴

Homer Stuntz was still more direct in pointing out that Latin America had not developed any sense of morality. He quoted with approval the claim by the North American traveller, Albert Hale, that the Latin American "had no conception of chastity". Stuntz maintained that people interested in the present and future of these countries must take this view into account.²⁵

Robert Speer, the greatest of the advocates of Protestantism in Latin America, had not doubt that the moral character of Latin American people was the main reason for the initiatives of Protestant missions. He criticized the Roman Catholic Church, not as responsible for that situation, but because she had done little remedy it. In trying to understand the origin of moral laxity in Latin America, Speer followed the current trend of some theorists of his time, that the matter was bound up with the tropical climate.

We have spoken of the immorality of South America as

justifying Protestant missions. The Roman Catholic Church in South America must be held in no small measure responsible for the immorality. Not wholly. Those countries are tropical. The people are hot blooded. There is human nature with its untamed passion. In our temperate lands there is immorality for which we would not admit that our churches are to blame.²⁶

Such an outlook on the moral character of Latin American people strengthened the point that Protestant missions always made, namely, that there were no major distinctions between Latin America and Asia or Africa. Speer was one of those Protestant leaders who firmly thought that Latin America, just like the non-Christian continents, was made up of nations with "deepening moral needs" which pressed the Christian Church with an urgent appeal.²⁷

In this line the Inland South-America Missionary Union argued, in 1920, that China and Japan were more enlightened than any Latin American country. The educational level acquired by Japan at that time, in the view of this mission, proved that Japan was no longer a "pagan country": "Everybody who knows anything about Japan says it is right and needful to send teachers there, and if that is true, surely it is three times more needful to send teachers to South America".²⁸ Its view on Latin America as expressed in the poem "Save South America" reveals why Protestantism must have its chance in the region:

Save South America

Harken South America is calling
Giant land of need and pain
This, the last great continent incognito!
Wherefore should she call in vain?
Pagan South America in darkness
Paraguay, Peru, Brazil,
Venezuela southward to the Argentine-
What a mighty need to fill!
Heathen South America is dying;
Listen to the Red-man's wail
Like a winding sigh among the palm trees tall,
Yonder, on the Indian trail.
Sin-sick South America is waiting
Till the shadows flee away
Prisoner of the centuries, in chains of night.
Send her Light and Life to-day!
Does the Saviour see the people dying
In a land so far away?
Yes, He sees, and bid us hasten unto them
Let us go, or give, or pray.²⁹

Indeed this was the approach that inspired most of the Protestant activists within the CCLA, though later, for convenience, they played down this view. However Protestant missions, even until well into this century, could not get themselves away from these cultural prejudices. In this context it was asserted that what was required in the region was not only Protestantism but all North American cultural influence.

Reverend Henry.K.Carroll, of the Methodist Episcopal Church (USA), was among those who argued that the presence of his country in Panama would improve the morals of the people there. Therefore he thought that the "horrors" of the traveller there were coming to an end, for, through the North American control of the Canal Zone,

people will "amend their ways and learn better ways in morals and religion".³⁰ No wonder Reverend Carroll thought this way. He indeed was one of the Protestant leaders who through his special interest grasped the extent of the power that the United States had acquired after the Spanish-American War. He was sent by President McKinley to report on conditions in Puerto Rico in 1899. As the envoy of the government, he was told by the politicians that they would accept North American rule "in expectation of obtaining the benefits of its institutions". However he was told by Munoz Rivera, the foremost Puerto Rican leader, "that statehood was the highest aspiration of the natives of the country."³¹ This latter the United States government never accepted.

However strong this view was, some important Protestant sources abstained from portraying the Latin American people as conscious wrongdoers. They rather emphasized the corrupting nature of their environment, arguing that people had been degraded by their social habitat. It was in this context that Latin Americans were often described children whose actions are, morally speaking, determined by their surroundings. Thus H.K. Carroll spoke of Panamanians as an "easy going people" who would soon learn the good manners of the North Americans.³² Winton argued that Latin Americans had not had the cultural incentive to improve their lives. While acknowledging that Mexico was not a land of thieves, he did discern a cultural

tendency to thieving: "Stealing is like lying in being a sort of natural outgrowth of servility: The state of servility that had marked people's lives had led them to "reason that they had certain rights to the belongings of the master".³³

This view on Latin Americans had obvious repercussions on the policy of the United States towards Latin America. A case in point was the justification of Theodore Roosevelt for ignoring the will of Colombia's Senate, when they turned down the requests of the United States to build the Panama Canal. Roosevelt declared that Colombians were not a superior but an inferior people. He contrasted this case with Germany's violation of the rights of Belgium, saying that the Belgians were as "superior as the Germans," whereas "to talk of Colombia as a responsible Power to be dealt with, as we would deal with Holland or Belgium or Switzerland or Denmark, is a mere absurdity".³⁴

Protestantism was presented as the religion most suitable for Latin America. It was by its nature, ethical, while the problems in Latin American countries were seen as basically moral problems.

Morality and creativity, among other virtues, were seen way, by Protestant missions, as neither indigenous to the Indian cultures or to the societies that Spanish colonialism had created, but as essentially Anglo-Saxon virtues. Stuntz stated this clearly:

When we think on their past with its dull monotony, its deep night of an illiteracy unbroken for centuries, its dirt, disease, contempt for suffering, low estimate of the value of

human life, and the absence of those tendencies which marked practically all of the races which make up the composite race of Anglo-Saxons, we can come into such a mental attitude toward their weaknesses where a deep yearning pity supplants all feelings of a less worthy nature and we unconsciously, but certainly, adapt our message to our hearers as we shall not do without knowing their past.³⁵

Whatever the virtues of the Latin Americans, they always fell short of meeting the criteria of the Protestant missionaries. Speaking generally, said Speer, they are warm-hearted, courteous, friendly, kind to children, respectful of religious things, patriotic to the very soul, but - Speer went on: "but the tone, the vigour, the moral bottom, the hard veracity, the indomitable purpose, the energy, the directness, the integrity of the Teutonic peoples are lacking in them"... Intellectually, even among the better educated, he maintained that there was an apathy which was manifest in their science, politics and religion.³⁶

Samuel G. Inman, Missionary of the Disciples of Christ in Mexico, and Executive secretary of the CCLA until 1939, used to contrast the people of the North and those of the South as "the engineers and the poets".³⁷ North Americans were the engineers, able to build great enterprises like the Panama Canal and many other constructions, whereas Latin Americans were described as poets who used to dream great ideas but were unable to carry them out. This was essentially the view of Stanley Rycroft, who, in 1939, succeeded Inman as executive secretary of the CCLA. Rycroft who felt himself identified with the people and culture of Latin America, thought that

people in these regions could easily imitate and adapt models, yet they were not, by nature, originals".³⁸

1.7. Propagation of Protestantism as self-defence

In the face of such a negative picture of the Latin American people, Protestant Christianity appeared to be the best instrument to elevate them. Christianity was presented as the only "reformatory agency" as Speer put it, in speaking on the importance of the intercourse of Protestant missions with the people of Latin America.³⁹

The geographical closeness between the North and the South was continually stressed as an element that somehow compelled the North to do something about the South. As a tract of the Women's Home Missionary Society put it: "There is no more important work in our own society than this down-trodden, ignorant neighbour on the southern frontier of the United States".⁴⁰

However the concern of the people who advocated Protestant work in Latin America was not only based on the well-being of Latin America, but also of North American culture. The evangelization of those wild people would eventually, according to missionaries, benefit the United States of the continual migration of people from the South towards the North. Protestant evangelization was seen as the means to provide an effective shield against the vices of the South. As early as 1889, The Missionary Review of the World recorded the call of somebody who, in trying to spur interest in Latin America argued

thus: "If we do not raise her moral and spiritual state, she will lower our own. Self-protection demands that we send to our Mexican neighbors the gospel in its purity.⁴¹

Aware of the importance of the relationship between Latin America and the United States, Protestants felt that the Southerners had to be cleansed, for otherwise the Northerners, in their contact with them, would get dirty. This view was clearly expressed by Charles Inwood:

God is behind the opportunity...South America is entering the family of western nations. And the question of the hour is this: Shall she enter to impoverish or enrich us? Shall she enter the family of the West as a maiden with the bloom of youth and purity on her brow? Or shall she enter as a rotting leper, whose presence is a menace, and whose embrace means death? If you do not evangelize South America, South America in turn will blight you. Our Christianity and our civilization will suffer if South America, black and foul to the heart's core, comes into close relation to us. And so I pray you wake up to all this. Our statesmen are waking up to it. Our men of commerce are waking up to it...⁴²

In the report to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1908, Bishop Neely considered that any religious help in Latin America was "a matter of self-interest and self- defense" for the United States.⁴³ Later in his South America: Its Missionary Problems (1909) he argued for the importance of the Bible, which would make South America "be a true sister of the great Republic in North America."⁴⁴

The alleged threat of the South towards the North was especially

underlined by those missionaries who were working in Mexico. From the time of the Mexican Revolution in 1910. Protestants had blamed the North's negligence with regard to the promotion of Protestantism there for the disorders. In this context Protestants resisted calls for the annexation of the country by some in the North. They rejected this, not because they opposed the Imperialistic aims of their country, but because they reckoned that the problems of the Latin American people would damage the United States.

For missionaries like John Butler, the great pioneer of Methodism in Mexico, annexation would mean taking "the wrong horn of the dilemma" and bring what he called "the curse of some three million illiterate Roman Catholic voters". "Such a curse" said Butler, "would thus create a balance of power fraught with great danger to our own Republic, to say nothing of the possible restitution of many of the former ills of the acquired territory".⁴⁵

2. Latin America needs Protestantism

2.1 Protestantism can fill the vacuum

It was understood in Protestant circles that Latin America was already experiencing a religious vacuum that was calling for the entrance of Protestantism to Latin America. Protestantism was presented as the only choice that could take the place of a religion which for centuries had failed to meet people's needs. Following the description of the failure of Christianity in Latin America, McAfee

Cleveland, in 1907, asked himself, "Who was now to carry the Word of God?".⁴⁶

Neely hinted the same when he made out that a new set of religious values was necessary in the region: "A new religious force is absolutely needed, and this must be supplied by Protestantism". Protestantism in his view "was better able to undertake the work".⁴⁷

For Robert Speer there was no doubt that Protestantism must fill the vacuum that the Roman Catholic Church had left among Latin American people. His arguments were as follows: (1) The moral condition of South American countries warrants and demands the presence of a form of evangelical religion which will war against sin and bring men the power of righteous life. (2) The Protestant missionary enterprise with its stimulus to education and its appeal to the rational nature of man is required by the intellectual needs of South America. (3) Protestant missions are justified in South America in order to give the Bible to the people. (4) Protestant missions are justified and demanded in South America by the character of the Roman Catholic priesthood. (5) Protestant missions are justified because the Roman Catholic Church has not given the people Christianity. (6) Protestant missions are justified in South America because the Roman Catholic Church is at the same time so strong and so weak. (7) The Roman Catholic Church in South America needs the Protestant missionary movement. (8) Evangelical Christianity is

warranted in going to South America because it alone can meet the needs of the Latin America nations.⁴⁸

The opportunity for Protestantism was a matter that Protestants themselves identified as a part of God's calling, which, at the same time, was verified by the longings of the people in the mission field. It was said that Latin American people, both within educated and higher classes, and at grassroots level, were asking them to come and help.

Indeed Protestants, in trying to avoid being considered as intruders, usually claimed that their decision to work in Latin America had little to do with the expansionist character of their religion, but had come rather through the insistence of Latin Americans themselves. A Commission of the Episcopal Methodist Church in Peru reflected this when it claimed that the Indian Quechuas "were kneeling down before the Protestant world, asking for opportunities for their spiritual and material development".⁴⁹ After having made up their mind to extend their work in Latin America, the appeal of the North American Protestant churches to their own constituencies was based on the idea that the people of Latin America desired a religious alternative. Conditions were there for them to introduce a change of religious values. In 1918, the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, in arguing for the importance of a stronger presence of Protestant workers, asserted that Latin American people were now "more interested in Protestantism

than they have ever been before".⁵⁰ The sense of duty towards Latin America shown by Protestant missions was intrinsically linked with their vision of being predestined to fill the religious vacuum that the failure of Roman Catholic Christianity had left. They were persuaded that Christianity would disappear altogether if that vacuum was not filled in time. They were already witnessing it in the general drifting away from the Roman Catholic Church. Having this in mind, Homer Stuntz observed the danger of an "impending collapse of traditional faith"⁵¹ and the Commission on Survey and Occupation at Panama referred the "imminent peril" of the crumbling of the traditional religious values.⁵² A pamphlet of EUSA put it thus:

The church of Christ is losing her hold on South America; the thoughtful among her people are drifting into infidelity; the masses are sinking into one deepening corruption for lack of the quickening influences of a living faith.⁵³

In this frame of reference the mediation of Protestantism in the religious scene of Latin America was deemed as vital. The choice for people was between Romanism, Paganism, and Protestantism. The latter was viewed as the only possibility, due to the fact, Neely said, "that neither Romanism nor paganism can save the continent... some other religion must take their place".⁵⁴

2.2. Latin America is heading towards a Reformation

As we said earlier, Protestant missionaries saw that their concern over the religious needs of Latin America was combined with

the affection that people there already felt for them. The opposition of people towards traditional Roman Catholic Christianity was paving the way for the introduction of Protestantism.

A parallel was seen between what these countries were experiencing and what Europe had gone through at the impact of the Reformation. It can be said that the religious ideas of the Reformation never played an important role in the religious activities of Protestant missions in Latin America. The Reformation was interpreted simply as a revolt against the Roman Catholic Church. It was believed that the failure of Catholicism in Latin America had put into motion a popular revolt that would culminate in the superseding of the official Church by Protestant churches. Protestant people saw this transition as partly due to the withdrawal of people's support from the church, and especially due to the withdrawal of priests from the church.

Protestant missionaries saw this action of priests and educated people withdrawing from the Roman catholic ranks as a sign that a Protestant reformation was taking place, and interpreted it as an invitation to Protestant missions to enter into Latin America. It is important to mention here that, as far as the Roman Catholic clergy were concerned, Protestants were exaggerating when they spoke of many of them abandoning their church. Though some took that decision, there is no evidence that indicates anything more than a few individual cases.

However as early as 1873 the Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Church, inspired by some of the North American delegation, interpreted the religious situation in Latin America as if it was in transition towards a sort of Protestant reformation. Alfred Lee, Bishop of Delaware, asked the Conference for support for the Mexican Catholics whom he believed were struggling within their own church to renew its structures. For him, the winds of reformation were blowing in Latin America. There, in different parts, priests were linked to the Anglican Communion through a sort of alternative church that they had called "The Church of Jesus". Its similarities with the Reformation led some North American Episcopalians to think that they must support this reaction within parts of the Roman Catholic Church. Bishop Lee put it thus:

The doctrines of the "Church of Jesus" are in accord with the Creeds and Articles of the Protestant Episcopal Church. As in the era of the Reformation, the revulsion from Rome is strong and decided. Papal corruption and oppression are to them fearful realities. Those who have given up friends and prospects of earthly advantage, and are hazarding their lives in the struggle for a pure faith, are not inclined to compromise with such an enemy.⁵⁵

Bishop Lee's understanding of the situation was rife among Protestant missionaries in the region. For example the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, since its beginning, in 1914, saw also in the rejection of the Roman Catholic Church by some of her priests, a forerunning shadow of the Reformation.

Regardless whether it was true or not, Protestants were indeed very impressed with the fact that a great number of priests were abandoning their church. This argument was linked to the fact that the Reformation of the sixteenth century was virtually carried out by ex Roman Catholic clergy. Consequently they were convinced that they could bring about a similar process in Latin America. CCLA leaders thought that they could forward Protestantism if they were able to draw on the support of those priests. Protestants really dreamed of building a new church directed by ex- Roman Catholic clergy. As a CCLA document put it, "Protestantism was made possible by ex-friars, ex-priests and ex-nuns...⁵⁶

It seems that the CCLA studied seriously the possibilities of organizing the clergy who had abandoned their church. This is why they gave importance to the creation of an institution exclusively earmarked to deal with the problems of ex-priests, ex-friars and ex-nuns. Angel Archilla, Presbyterian leader in Puerto Rico, gave his special attention to this, and considered the creation of such an institution as "worthy of the Christian cause". He believed that Protestant missions should allocate resources to help them, in the understanding that they could be of great benefit to Christianity in Latin America.

However, some priests who had in the past joined Protestant churches had proved to be failures. The cause of this Archilla

attributed to the churches:

No Protestant institution has in the last century done anything systematically and appropriately to guide, protect and help ex-friars and ex-priests. Of course, I know that many of those ex-priests and ex-friars have been a failure. I am not surprised. I am surprised that anyone has succeeded, because the way we have handled this problem has been the worst. They need time to adjust themselves. If there were any way of financing such an institution on some neutral soil I believe it would be overcrowded with Latin American priests and monks within a year. Of course there would be a great many imposters who would have left for other spiritual reasons...Recommendation: That the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America appoint a committee to study the best means to meet this growing demand coming from the field. 57

1.3. The Roman Catholic Church needs Protestantism

Protestant missions looked on themselves as challenging the Roman Catholic Church to renew itself. They continually used to argue that religious competition created favourable conditions which would eventually help Roman Catholicism to improve its service in Latin America. The good character of the Roman Catholic Church in Protestant countries was always quoted to illustrate this. It also mentioned as a positive experience of the colonial Spanish possessions taken over by the United States following the Spanish-American War in 1898. In these colonial areas, circumstances, according to Speer, forced the Roman Catholic Church, like it or not, to better her conditions:

Where there was tyranny, stagnation, persecution, ignorance, and superstition, the spirit of American freedom and

Protestant Christianity are now bringing in the new and different order which Spain and Rome have always opposed, but under which the Roman Catholic Church is uplifted and purified in spite of herself. The transformation of Porto Rico has been even greater; for there, American institutions have had more immediate play and have flourished in the certainty of American political jurisdiction.⁵⁸

The Philippines was the other case that was extolled by Protestants to show how the Protestant presence helped to purify Roman Catholic clergy. An editorial in The Missionary Review of the World mentioned how the antipathy that people had against them disappeared after the North American control of those islands. The replaced Spanish friars died and were particularly by better ones.

In this line of thought Neely believed that wherever a Protestant mission was planted the priests of the Roman Catholic Church become more circumspect: "So it is being modified by the presence of Protestantism, just as Romanism in Great Britain, the United States, and Canada is restrained by its Protestant environment".⁵⁹

Protestants stressed this as the basis of the great differences between the Roman Catholic Church in North America and Europe and the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America. Harlam P. Beach, of Yale University, for instance, thought that in Europe and North America, the Roman Catholic Church "was removed from the superstition, persistently living in the yet ever moribund Church of Latin America".⁶⁰

The United States had made it clear that Catholicism, in a strong

Protestant environment, "is purged of grosser superstition and saved from the base consequences of its own development".⁶¹ Speer claimed that, unlike in Europe and the United States, "the South American Church has never waged any such war against impurity".⁶² In a word Protestantism will, in a measure, purify it:

The Roman Catholic Church in South America needs the Protestant missionary movement. There is good in that Church in South America. There are good men and women in it. In spite of the falsehoods and vicious elements in it, there is truth also. That the good in it may triumph over the evil, there is need of external stimulus and purification. The presence of Protestant missions alone will lead the Church into a self cleansing and introduce the forces, or support whatever inner forces there may already be, which may correct and vivify it. There are some who think that the South American religious system is simply to be swept away, that it cannot be reformed, but there is another view open to us, and that is, that against whatever odds, and with whatever deep cutting excisions, the good may be strengthened and enabled to eliminate the evil. Already Protestant missions have wrought great changes. They have altered the ostensible attitude of the Church towards the Bible.⁶³

In practice some Protestant missions believed that the Roman Catholic Church was irredeemable and that her inevitable fate was to give way to Protestantism. Others however looking at the likelihood of any renewal within the Roman Catholic Church linked this, in some measure, to the influence of Protestantism:

The truth is that the "Church of their fathers" must reestablish its hold upon the Mexicans by other methods than those through which for several centuries it has held undisputed sway. Appeal must now be made to the judgment and moral sense of the people. Mere authority will no longer

suffice. The appeal of tawdry trappings and of gorgeous ritual does not win the thoughtful, and the Mexicans are becoming thoughtful. Whatever strength the Roman Catholic Church shall exhibit in the future -and doubtless it will remain a potent factor in the life of the Mexican people -must be attained largely as Protestantism is seeking to establish its hold, "by pureness, by knowledge, by long- suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by the word of truth, by the power of God". To bring back thus into the realm of spiritual vitality the might of that efficient and venerable organization, is destined to be one of the praiseworthy achievements of Protestant work in Catholic countries.⁶⁴

After a decade of working in Latin America, the CCLA began to realize that instead of thinking that Protestantism could replace the Roman Catholic Church, they had to make every effort to contribute to her renewal. At the time of the Montevideo Congress, in 1925, some Protestants were expressing a better opinion of the commitment of the Roman Catholic Church. This they interpreted as an outgrowth of its encounter with Protestantism. Webster Browning, Presbyterian missionary in Chile, believed so: "Better and more frequent sermons are being preached from Roman Catholic pulpits, evil practices have been curbed by the authorities of that Church itself, and much inherent good has been revealed and developed".⁶⁵

In conclusion, the claim that Latin America had been assisted by the Roman Catholic Church being given as a reason to prevent Protestantism from entering this continent was invalidated. This only because of its weaknesses, but also because of the vast immensity of the field. As a pamphlet put it, even if Rome were pure and preached a

pure Gospel instead of a simply performing an endless round of Romish ritual...their numbers are fearfully inadequate.⁶⁶ In same way Samuel G. Inman said that even if the Catholic Church were preaching an undefiled religion, its forces were not in any way sufficient to minister to the religious needs of Latin America.⁶⁷

3. Protestantism and Capitalism

3.1 Protestantism and Neocolonialism

The interest that Protestant missions showed in Latin America at the beginning of the twentieth century was closely intertwined with the new emphasis which the United States placed on the South as commercial asset.

In the past North American Missionary Societies had believed that Protestantism would not gain any important ground in Latin America as long as the region was under the control of Spain. This belief survived even after independence as many Latin American leaders continued to be attached ideologically to old colonial ways. Speer, for example, had written in 1904 that Latin America under Spain was a closed field for evangelical missions; and that even North American Protestant churches had had missionary interest in the early nineteenth century, they could have done nothing in Latin America.⁶⁸

This view was to a certain extent correct, in that Protestant ideas were resisted by Spain as a danger to its interests; and Spanish influence lingered on into the twentieth century. Rebellion against

Spain had been looked on hopefully as opening the door for Protestant missions to enter, but in fact the liberation from Spain did not mean any automatic entrance of Protestantism.

Protestantism gained ground only in those countries that were directed by liberal elites who had ideologically broken off with Spain. This was also true of countries which had been under permanent or temporary colonial control by European Protestant powers, and later those which had come under North American neocolonialism, namely Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, The Dominican Republic, Nicaragua etc.

Though Protestant individuals and missions followed their country, most did it on the understanding that military control was not enough. They believed that Protestantism was vital to the introduction of North American values. In the same way as the Spanish clergy had followed the conquerors, Protestants believed that only spiritual conquest could complete North American military control. This is seen in the case of Melinda Ranking who is considered as one of the pioneers of Protestantism in Mexico.

Ranking arrived in Mexico after the United States invaded the country in 1848. Her decision to go to Mexico to propagate Protestantism was motivated, on the one hand, by her support the United States's ambitions there and, on the other hand, by the religious situation of Mexicans, whom she called, "long-neglected

people". For her, military conquest must be followed by spiritual conquest:

It seem to me that after conquering these miserable people, it was the duty of American Christians to attempt something for their spiritual elevation. Indeed, I felt that the honour of American Christianity most imperatively demanded it.⁶⁹

The Spanish-American War of 1898 was a watershed in the growing North American interest political and economical development of Latin America. Indeed the North American occupation of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines spelt the beginning of real Protestant penetration in the region, and Protestantism followed behind the colonial expansion of the United States into the region. After the Spanish-American War, Protestant missions in the United States began to pay more attention to the religious situation in Latin America.

The Panamerican Union, founded in 1890, was used to the full in the first two decades of this century, in the promotion of commercial intercourse between the North and the South. Its importance was such that in 1910 its own building was inaugurated. It worked officially as a branch of the Department of State of the United States government. It was under the backing of the Panamerican Union that some North American businessmen met, in 1913, to discuss the best way of taking advantage of Latin America as an exporter of raw material and as an importer of United States

manufactures.

In fact businessmen were the first in this century to describe Latin America as the "continent of opportunity" as John Barret, Director General of the Panamerican Union, portrayed it. Barret was persuaded that because of its natural resources and commercial prospects, Latin America "should convince the most sceptical that this was greatest field of commerce for American diplomacy and commerce".⁷⁰

Another event that confirmed the importance of the region for the North American interests was the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution in 1910. The fall of Porfirio Dias, dictator of Mexico for 30 years, in the 1910 revolt of Francisco Madero, threw that country into a period of political uncertainty that threatened foreign interests. The crisis rekindled the old bitterness towards North American interests in Mexico. The revolutionaries wanted Mexican control of all its natural resources.

The opening of the Panama Canal in 1915 greatly increased North American influence, while outbreak of the World War I brought to an end the traditional links with Europe in which Latin America had taken pride in the nineteenth century.

The inauguration of this new era was sealed with "the diplomacy of the dollar" or the decision of the North-American banks to grant loans to Latin American countries. The control of the Panama

Canal accelerated the interest of the United States in financially controlling Latin American countries. This was carried out by a flood of loans. Loans were seen as the way to keep this region outside the control of European nations, and later could serve as a pretext to invade certain countries militarily. The inability of Latin American countries to fulfil agreements with North American banks was the reason for various military interventions by the United States from the time of the opening of the Panama Canal.

Indeed this new concern for Latin America was viewed in Protestant circles as marking a major conceptual change-- the switch from one era to another, namely, the transition from the "neglected continent" to the "continent of opportunity". This latter expression represented more clearly the new way in which Latin America was about to be treated in financial and commercial, as well as in religious terms.

3.2. Protestants realise the opportunity

Dr. Francis Clark, founder of the Christian Endeavour Movement in the United States, was among the first Protestant writers to describe this new mood, in a book entitled The Continent of Opportunity was the title of his book, published in 1907. In it he described his findings of an extensive journey in Latin America. The main point of the book was that Latin America was now "the continent of opportunity for Protestant missions, as well as for

material advancement".⁷¹ His explanation of his choice of his book's title is clear enough:

I have chosen my title as containing the one word that describes most accurately the present and the future of South America. In all matters, as well as in matters more spiritual, in her mines and manufactures, in her forests and fisheries, in her commerce and agriculture, in her school and churches, in her politics and business, South America is to-day preeminently the continent of opportunity. ⁷²

In England SAMS also recognised this new trend, at the annual meeting of 1910, when the chairman, quoting The Times newspaper, called Latin America "the coming continent".⁷³ Later in 1912 SAMS referred to Latin America as the neglected continent that had now become the "continent of opportunity".⁷⁴ Dr. Campbell Morgan of EUSA also underlined the change when spoke of Latin America as "the last continent that God in his government is opening to humanity". He believed that the continent of opportunity was "the church's opportunity".⁷⁵

Samuel G. Inman, North American missionary in Mexico since 1906, was one of the Protestant leaders who had first-hand knowledge of the change in direction towards the treatment of Latin America. For him Latin America was no longer a neglected area as it had been in the 1910. "Today", Inman said in the twenties, "she can be compared to the rich maiden, spoiled and praised by many people who aspire to her white and coveted hand".⁷⁶

In a word the road to the Panama Congress in 1916 was paved by

a series of social events that made clear the fact that Latin America was no longer an neglected continent. Inman summarised it thus:

At the opening of the twentieth century those nations were an unrecognized power in the council of nations, in international commerce and world peace...In 1906 Secretary Root made his remarkable journey through the South and attracted the attention of the world. In 1907 the Latin American delegates for the first time took their place at the council table of the nations and astounded the world by the brilliancy of their representatives at the Hague Conference. In 1910 the beautiful building of the Pan American Union, due to munificence of Andrew Carnegie, was dedicated as the impressive shrine of American Unity and the workshop of practical American cooperation. In 1915 the Panama Canal was opened and sent forth a flood of compelling motives for world interest in Latin America. In 1915 there was held in Washington the first Pan American Financial Congress.⁷⁷

The Methodist missionary, Homer Stuntz, recorded as unique the action of the Boston Chamber of Commerce and the Illinois Manufacturers' Association in sending, in 1913, a number of specialists to assess the possibilities for investment. He was pleased that the businessmen returned to their country "convinced of the rich opportunities of trade."⁷⁸

From the very beginning of the Spanish American War Protestant forces looked on it as a great opportunity to spread Protestantism. The agents of Bible Societies had clear views on this. Quoting the Spanish proverb "No hay mal que por bien no venga" (it is an ill wind that blows nobody good) a report of the British and Foreign Bible Society underlined the new opportunities that the War "was to bring for Bible work outside Europe".⁷⁹

In making this sort of assertion, Protestants failed to perceive the true nature of the conflict. Here it was read simply as a rebellion of the people against traditional religious dominion:

We can at least recognise some purpose of goodness educating itself amid the tumult and suffering of the present deplorable conflict. For instance, whatever be the upshot of the struggle, it can hardly fail to involve autonomy for Cuba and Puerto Rico and with that, a large measure of religious freedom. While with regard to the Philippines, it is noteworthy that the original rebellion there, was in essence a revolt against the domination and exactions of religious orders... This war is to bring about new opportunities for Bible work outside Europe...⁸⁰

In looking back on the origins of Protestantism in Latin America, CCLA's leaders underlined the importance of the Spanish American War. They pointed out that after this event Protestant boards began to look on and think of these territories in the same way as "they did of the home missionary territory in continental United States".⁸¹

Puerto Rico was a typical case of the penetration of Protestantism as an outgrowth of North American colonial expansion:

Prompt advantage was taken by the evangelical churches of North America of the opportunity thus afforded to enter the island. Within three years ten different agencies were at work. With a good feeling and a wisdom which might well have been imitated elsewhere, these denominations made a general division of territory, so that as far as possible each should have its own sphere of influence.⁸²

The escalation of the colonial presence of the United States

provided for Protestant Missionaries, compelling reasons for their religion to be expanded in Latin America. In the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1908, Methodist Bishop, Thomas Neely drew attention to the fact that the United States was closely involved in Latin America and would be profoundly affected by what happened there. The principle was illustrated, he said, in Cuba and Santo Domingo.⁸³

Advocates of Protestant work in Latin America after 1916 saw their religious activities as part and parcel of that new North American commercial interest in the region. When CCLA leaders looked back to see what had contributed most to their work in Latin America, they had no trouble in acknowledging that the expansion of Protestantism had been helped indirectly through the activity of organizations like the Panamerican Union, the National City Bank, and commercial clubs. Furthermore many Protestants had not doubt that business men interested in pure commercial aims were ready to support the expansion of protestantism: "If the missions Boards will make definite appeals for concrete enlargement of their work they will find business men interested".⁸⁴

North American Protestant missionaries comprehended the power that their country was gaining not only in Latin America but at worldwide level. They clearly grasped the geopolitical importance of the control of the Panama Canal, and the role that their country

acquired as a an outcome of the World War I.

The Presbyterian missionary J.H. McLean, for instance, acknowledged that the convulsion across the Atlantic had raised his country to first rank as a money-lending power, and had enabled the United States to launch a world-wide plan for securing markets. He noted that that North American banks had been established all over Latin America.⁸⁵

In the context of Latin America Protestants looked at this growing presence of the United States, not only as a great opportunity to take financial advantage of the region, but also, and perhaps most important, as a great occasion for the promotion and propagation of the best North American values.

The fact that the World War I had made Latin America buy manufactures and borrow money from the United States instead of Europe had to be seen, according to Stuntz, as a fact that involved responsibilities beyond mere commercial intercourse.⁸⁶

The responsibility rested on a fair deal in terms of wages for the "chief producers of dividends" but also in the expansion of Protestantism as a set of values that were in line with the ideals that Latin Americans were looking for in terms of the betterment of society. Francis Clark, for instance, shared the conviction of Neely, that the financial advantages that Latin America represented for the United States made her more responsible for "sending a purer gospel to her

sister republics of the southern hemisphere...the best religion that she possesses". In doing so, Clark believed that North America would both enrich herself and ennoble the whole continent.⁸⁷

3.3. Religious influence must match commercial influence

In 1918 a Commission of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church in United States went even further by hinting that the investment of money in the expansion of Protestantism was vital for the commercial trade with Latin America: "Since 1913 our trade with Latin America has grown from \$389.000.000 to 875.000.000. If we are to keep up this new relation, we need religious as well commercial understanding."⁸⁸

Besides, they understood that the money they were collecting for religious activities in Latin America was part of the North American investment in Latin America: "to keep our trade interests in South America we have invested \$80,000,000 since the War began; besides that amount the \$5,505,000 Methodism is asking for religious work, looks very small."⁸⁹ In a way Protestant missionaries believed that their presence must measure up to the commercial presence of their country in the region, and advocated what P.A. Conard called in the Panama Congress "a free trade in moral resources".⁹⁰ The CCLA annual report, in line with this, asserted that "the spiritual influence of the North American people should certainly grow commensurately with these other influences".⁹¹

It is in this context that Samuel G. Inman referred to the unequal proportion of North American religious presence in Mexico. For him the United States could have avoided the conflict with Mexico in this century if the investment on "the development of Mexico's soul" had been commensurate with the exploiting of Mexico's natural resources. He saw it as inconsistent that North American capitalist had invested \$1,000,000,000 in this, whereas Protestant missionary forces had invested only about \$2,000,000 in their property.⁹²

Most Protestant missionaries were convinced that the expansion of their country's interests meant the expansion of Protestantism. For instance, in Central America the Protestant presence was facilitated, by both the Panama Canal and the permanent military actions of the United States in Nicaragua.

Francis Clark praised the 1903 treaty that gave "perpetual legality" to the North American control of the Panama Canal, for creating favourable conditions for the entrance of Protestantism. "From that day to this", said Clark, "the Republic of Panama has been of special interest to North Americans, and the Southern Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians are now in the field".⁹³

3.4. Protestant use of military metaphors

In this context Protestants often used military metaphors

to refer to their actions in the mission fields. Their closeness to the colonial expansion of their country made them feel that they were waging the spiritual side of a war that their country was waging in Latin America to safeguard security in the region.

The more the origins of Protestant missions in Latin America are examined, the more we realize that they were typical reproductions of the ideological framework of their epoch. This is a reflection of the fact that that missions were not only unable to distance themselves from the cultural and sociological values of their time, but chose to identify the Christian message with those values. The continual use of military analogies is a diaphanous example of this. Of course this happened not only in the case of Latin America, but also in other mission fields.

To explain this various reasons could be mentioned, but the foremost explanation was the Western missionary leaders sympathy with the colonial expansion of their countries. The influence of the West would not be possible without their military power, and mission leaders thought, that they could not succeed unless their missions took up at organization level some of the military features.

Missionary leaders did not ignore that there were people who did not agree with the use of military analogies to describe the expansion of Christianity. However, all criticism at this level was simply ignored, on the ground that it was a useful symbolism. This is

why Robert Speer observed in his Christianity and the Nations (1910) that however of how unpalatable this could be for some people, it was difficult to avoid the use of military references to portray the work of Christian missions:

We are told to-day that we must cease to use military metaphors with reference to the mission of Christianity. It is a little hard for us to do this who cannot forget the language of the New Testament. But the metaphors are of no consequence. The essential thing is the truth which the metaphors veil, and that truth we believe to be triumphant, fulfilling conquest of Christianity and the sovereignty of Christ's name over every name.⁹⁴

Though missions, at large, did not oppose colonial imperialism, they were concerned that Christianity was not matching that power. It is in this context that Christianity, as it was seen by Protestant missionary societies, appears as an "imperialistic religion". Writing in 1910 on the progress of missionary work Samuel Gammon, North American pioneer of Protestantism in Brazil, used terms like "the Evangelical Invasion of Brazil".⁹⁵

Christ was a sort of "General or Commander" leading the army (missions and churches) to conquest and occupation the pagan "kingdoms". The United States was destined to conquer Latin America not only materially, but spiritually as well. As an editorial of The Missionary Review of the World put it in 1909: "Divine providence seems to have put this southern continent before us, as itself a challenge for occupation and evangelization."⁹⁶ And the Church of

God was seen as an army "mobilised for conquest ...until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ"...⁹⁷

In the Panama Congress, the prevalent mood among the delegates was similar to that which prevails among military people before launching an attack. The correlation between military actions and the expansion of Christianity there, was clearly understood by Charles Thompson, who at that time was chairman of the Home Missions Council, in New York. In his introduction to the report on Cooperation and Unity, he said:

Our program today is to conquer not by individual heroism, but by organization. With the knowledge which we have acquired here during these days, we can frame such a program as will give solidarity and force to the body of Jesus Christ...And how shall that Church go at its task? The first matter to take into consideration is of course, its physical possession. Here is a vast continent to handle. The way is clearly not by competition, but by delimitation of territory. Delimitation may seem to be only keeping out of each other's way. But cooperative delimitation is good strategy.⁹⁸

At Panama there was a feeling that the earlier attempts to propagate Protestantism in the region were 'failed attacks', insofar as the 'army' had been weakened by internal divisions, represented by conflict and emphasis on denominational lines. The avoidance of these internal divisions explains why the Panama Congress pointed to the division and delimitation of territories, among Protestant denominations as its main concern. Indeed the problems between denominations were always portrayed by the organisers and supporters

of the CCLA as a hindrance.

Months later in a review of the Panama Congress in The Missionary Review of the World, Thompson reiterated that Protestant missions had to switch tactics: "We have failed to conquer with our divided lines. Let us try the effect of united columns".⁹⁹

He could not understand why Protestant missions that had worked in Latin America before 1916 had not learned the lessons that the missionary experience in China and Japan had given. He observed that in those Asiatic countries, unlike in Latin America, "bodies differing in doctrine and polity can get together as a united Church" Surely, he said, on this continent we should be able to do the same. Latin America furnishes a fine field for such an experiment...¹⁰⁰

In fact the objective of dividing territories among Protestant denominations was a replica of the colonial expansion of the West. In order to avoid conflict Western powers divided the colonial regions among themselves. The partition of the "spiritual treasure" among the different Protestant denominations was, in many senses, a replica of colonial imperialism. This can be seen in the following statement whereby Fleming H. Revel argued for the importance of cooperation among Protestant missions in Latin America:

Not very long since, there was a conference of great iron workers in the city of Washington. Representatives were there from Germany, from France, from Belgium, from Australia, from England and from other lesser nations. They were gathered there to find out how they could best foster the

interests that they represented. They determined it would be wise to adopt some emblem that would portray their purpose and they adopted a double one, one to indicate the past, the other to indicate their purpose for the future. The first emblem was a melting pot in which were some rifles with crossed bayonets, over which was written, "Might is right" and under it the word, "Competition". The second emblem was a melting pot in which rifles were stuck with reversed bayonets. Over that was written, "Right is might" and under it, "Cooperation". Are the men of this world wiser in their generation than the children of light?...¹⁰¹

Once an agreement was reached in regard to the division of territories among the Protestant missions, they spoke of the allocated regions as if, in fact, they belonged to them. This was later evident when the CCLA leaders tried to modify the division which had been made at the Panama Congress. The attitude of missions to a revision was mostly negative.

In the Montevideo Congress, in 1925, most of the missions responded negatively to the question of whether they would like to see the entrance of other agencies into their territories. A sample of the general mood was expressed in the case of Venezuela where the missions to which this "treasure" had been allocated at Panama, said that except for the Indian work "it would be unwise and unnecessary to invite any other Board to assume responsibilities for the unoccupied areas of Venezuela" adding that "most of the societies have the possibility of growth and they are the ones who should undertake the occupation of the neglected areas".¹⁰²

The use of the metaphors from military language was also

present in other descriptions. Zones that somehow or other began to be affected by Protestant activities were called "outposts". The practice of dropping Protestant leaflets from aeroplanes was another example. It was a copy of how in military operations leaflets were often dropped to warn of an attack.

In another use of military vocabulary the Protestant missions portrayed themselves as the spiritual brigade of Western military imperialism. In this, Protestant missions did not show any difference from those of the Roman Catholic Church, which even long after the political break of Latin America with Spain (1821), felt identified with the old regime. An example of this was the title of the letter sent by Mexican Canon, Vincent P. Andrade, to his clergy in 1905: "Carta Acerca de los Conquistadores Espirituales de la Nueva Espana" (Letter concerning the Spiritual Conquerors of the New Spain).¹⁰³ Although this attitude was under scathing attacks by Protestant missionaries in Latin America, the Protestants fell into the same trap.

While North American Imperialism struggled for control of the economic and social life of its dominions within and outside of Latin America, Protestant missionaries believed that they were waging the same battle but at the spiritual level. They were "spiritual soldiers" who followed the path of the military soldiers.

This language appears, for example, in the comparison that L.B. Armstrong, North American Missionary, made with his country's

response to the popular insurrection in the Philippines. It was quoted in the bulletin of the Central American Mission thus:

How can God's children in this highly favored land fail to respond, ' Here am I, send me?' When the natives rebelled against the United States the President sent out all over the country, recruiting officers for young men, volunteers, to go to that land, taking their lives in their hands, to put down the insurrection. Fine young Americans came from every quarter till the President said I have all I want. Now a mighty rebellion of those poor natives against Rome, "the mother of harlots" is raging, and they are crying out to soldiers of the cross, in this and other lands, to come over and save us. Come over and tell us the way of life ere we die. Shall we who profess, be less brave and faithful than the young men who went for worldly honor -a fading crown- when before us there is a crown of righteousness that shall shine as the stars forever and ever.¹⁰⁴

However this does not mean that Protestant missionaries in the Philippines looked on themselves as a mere helpers of their country's colonial advances. Protestant work in the framework of colonial expansion was portrayed as the vital ingredient that would complete the military aims. Besides, they thought that military forces alone could represent some risk for the people subjected, for, troops brought with them "the usual problems". Therefore the new frontier needed soldiers of the cross as well: "Unless Christian ideals go with them, soldiers are apt to prove a menace to the islanders".¹⁰⁵

This outlook came to fore in the context of the North American control of Puerto Rico, which resulted from of the Spanish-American War in 1898. In advocating the importance of Protestantism there,

Protestant missions understood that the consolidation of the new set of political values that the colonial power wanted to impose there needed first a change of religious attitudes on the part of the population.

It was said that due to its religious tradition, Puerto Rico had to experience the virtues of a "democratic church" in order to facilitate the emergence of a democratic society. Indeed the North American presence was perceived as incomplete, so long as Protestant religion did not take root there.

The influence itself of Protestant churches in the development of the United States was quoted to illustrate what must happen in Puerto Rico. In the United States, a free church "has made possible a free democracy", and Puerto Ricans therefore also "needed the influence of such a church".¹⁰⁶

Hence the urgent need in Puerto Rico was, as Harlan Douglas of the American Missionary Association, put it, "the proclamation of the gospel and the establishing of a democratic church...".¹⁰⁷ Time was showing that military control did not bring about any substantial change in the people's religious view, so Protestants simply expressed their dissatisfaction by considering North American influence as an incomplete process. This is the impression that Samuel G. Inman gives us with this statement: We have taken over Puerto Rico, and she may admit with us that there are certain advantages in living under

our flag. But having taken her land, will we take her soul?.¹⁰⁸

The same view was taken with regard to Mexico. After the revolution of 1910 had revived Mexican distrust in the North American interest in the country, military invasion was considered.

However, Protestant missionaries, working there, had no doubt that the North could reach its aims there better through the expansion of Protestantism than through any military solution. The spread of true religion, said George Winton, is far better than to threaten Mexico with armed intervention.¹⁰⁹ Samuel G.Inman put it thus:

It is not the case of a revolution that must be squelched, but an evolution that must be guided. We might as well settle down to the fact that it is the problem of slowly changing a nation into the image of God - a God whose very name is unknown to one-fifth of the population and whose Book cannot be read by four-fifths of its people. The Mexican people are not to blame for the chaotic condition of their country. I challenged you to tell me what nation under the sun has ever developed a real democracy without having had preached and ground into its life, the principles of the Sermon on the Mount. I repeat that we may expect no permanent settlement of the Mexican problem until her people have been imbued with the democratic teaching of Jesus. But you say this is the word of a missionary enthusiast.¹¹⁰

3.5. View on the Panama Canal

Control of the building of the Panama Canal after 1902, and especially its opening in 1915 were events, that Protestant missions greeted cheerfully. They believed that the Panama Canal would result in the promotion of Protestantism in the region. This was in line with

their understanding that the promotion of North-American values was inherent in the privileged geo-political position that the Canal gave to their country.

The longing for the building of a canal in Central America was a dream that several world powers had entertained during the nineteenth century. Great Britain, France and the United States contended with each other for the control of a possible route, firstly through Nicaragua and later through Panama, when this latter belonged to Colombia. The United States had successfully prevented Great Britain from pursuing the Nicaraguan possibility.

France was the first in 1842 to get an agreement with Colombia to build the Panama Canal, though it did not begin to build until 1880. It was only after the appropriation of Puerto Rico and the takeover of Cuba, as a result of the Spanish-American war, that the United States realized its real strategic importance. The long voyage that the battleship Oregon had to make round Cape Horn to help in the Spanish-American war was the factor that dramatically confirmed the need for it to the United States.

By this time France had virtually abandoned the project due to endless financial problems. This allowed the United States to seek an arrangement with Colombia in 1902 in order to buy the French rights in Panama. However the Colombia Senate turned down the terms on which the United States wanted it. Subsequently the United States

supported the breaking away of Panama from Colombia, which took place in 1903.¹¹¹

At the Pan American Medical Congress in 1904, Henry.K. Carroll, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, an advocate of the penetration of Protestantism into Latin America, recommended the investment of capital in the cleaning up of the Canal Zone. "It will cost hundreds of millions", he said, "but it will pay, and it will be a great boon to floating commerce".¹¹²

The Methodist Bishop Thomas Neely understood how the Panama Canal would eventually help the introduction of Protestantism to the whole region. He believed that the Canal was a mark of the power that the United States had in Latin America. In the General Conference of the Methodist Church in 1908, he maintained that his country was now more compelled than ever to support Protestant work in Latin America, because "North America has become a South American power".¹¹³

Protestants took at face value the words of President Wilson in the Southern Commercial Congress, in 1913, when he emphasized that the Panama Canal meant a spiritual union of both regions:

New ties with Latin America included spiritual ones too. The future is going to be very different for this hemisphere from the past. These states lying to the south of us, which have always been our neighbors, will now be drawn closer to us by innumerable ties, and I hope, chief of all, by the tie of a common understanding of each other. Interest does not tie nations together, it sometimes separates them. But sympathy

and understanding does unite them, and I believe that by the new route that is just about to be opened, while we physically cut two continents asunder we spiritually unite them. It is a spiritual union which we seek.¹¹⁴

Neely saw as normal the expansion of Protestantism into a territory where "the flag flies there, American soldiers are there, the police and the courts are there, and Americans are at work on the canal."¹¹⁵ Francis Clark, of the Christian Endeavour Movement, also believed that the Panama Canal provided a compelling reason for the United States to contribute Protestant missions to Latin America. He made it clear in his book The Continent of Opportunity (1907) that in having control of the building of the Panama Canal, the United States had become a power in Latin America and as such "has some responsibility in sending a purer gospel to her sister republics of the southern hemisphere."¹¹⁶

Later, in his book The Gospel in Latin Lands (1909) he reiterated the same. On this occasion he said that the purchase of a territory in which the United States had "unlimited powers of jurisdiction" was another "peculiar reason for the special interest of North American Christians in South American missions".¹¹⁷

At the Panama Congress of 1916 the Canal was described by Dr. William Adams, professor of Union Theological Seminary, ^{New York,} as a gift of God signifying the United States's faith in God. The building of the Canal reflected the special relationship of God with this nation.

The completion of the canal was portrayed by Dr. Adams in the

same way as other North American Protestants had read the success of the nation in the war with Spain. Historian Hofstadter reminded us that Protestants, inspired by Calvinistic theology, minimised any guilty feeling of national wrongdoing, by seeing their success as "an outward sign of an inward state of grace." He exemplified this by quoting a Baptist periodical which referred to the defeat of Spain's navy "as the walls of Jericho went down", and the editor of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, who saw in it "the stories of the ancient battles of the Lord in the times of Joshua, David, and Jehoshaphat."¹¹⁸ As far as the Panama Canal was concerned, Adams saw it as a testimony that they were "no longer the apostles of an unproved faith; but of that which has been verified over and over again" He went on:

We have been carried through the Panama Canal, and we have been thinking, many of us, of those early days when the French engineers first began their work, and we have been wondering at the faith which made them believe that the task was possible, But we do not fully learn the lesson of their faith, until we realize that to the resources that were then at their command the task was impossible. And yet the task has been done. It is because God had in His keeping, new weapons which they could not command, but which those were to use who came after...We are not serving a dead but living Christ.¹¹⁹

He paralleled the immense importance of the building of the Panama Canal with that of the movement that would come out of the Panama Congress, namely, a powerful organization able to expand Protestantism in Latin America: "And so", he said, "it is our task of spiritual reconstruction. We are not shut up [with] the resources which

we now possess...".¹²⁰

In fact the opening of the Panama Canal was sometimes explained as a theological episode. This is so in the case of James Vance, who in his speech on "The Vitality and Conquering Power of Christianity" at the Panama Congress, linked the Canal with the Congress by saying that they were "meeting amid activities which are suggestive if not prophetic". "The Panama Canal", he asserted, "is my country's splendid contribution to Pan-Americanism. It is more than that: It is my country's unmistakable proclamation of her creed of internationalism".¹²¹

Besides this, he saw the symbolism of the Panama Canal, unifying the two continents, as a recall to the religious unity that Protestants at the Panama Conference had stressed as a sine qua non to religiously vitalize Latin America:

What we need for Christian work in North, no less than in South America is an ecclesiastical Canal Zone that shall end our denominational isolation and unify our plans and forces, and unite us in our supreme, mastering, conquering, purpose for the kingdom. ¹²²

3.6. Protestants and World War I

Protestant missionaries in Latin America interpreted the War as an event that would stimulate their work in the region. The War was looked on in this way because, on the one hand, it served to sever the old links of Latin American countries with Europe, and on

the other hand, because the entrance of the United States into the conflict had positively impressed Latin Americans.

The fact that the war cut off Latin America from its old links with Europe, together with the commercial interests which North American businessmen had been seeking to take over since the beginning of the twentieth century, prompted both North and South to re-start a new relationship. Protestants argued that this new relationship was leading both sections to discover positive facets of each other that they had ignored before. They were clear that the conflict helped Latin Americans to see in a more positive way the role of the United States, and, in turn, the United States to realize the value of Latin America.

The alienation of Latin America from Europe had repercussions at many levels. It introduced factors that affected financial, social and cultural aspects of the life of Latin American societies.

The War had interrupted the importation and exportation of goods from Europe, and its financial consequences for European nations prevented them, for some time, from renewing the commercial and cultural relations had been established with Latin American countries since their political independence from Spain. The disruption of the War enabled the United States to outstrip England, her strongest trading competitor. The value of United States-Latin American trade rose from less than three quarters of a billion

dollars in 1913 to nearly \$3 billion in 1919.¹²³

The financial dependence of Latin America on North America as a result of the War alerted missionaries like Stuntz to the closer relations that both regions were experiencing:

The beginning of the closer commercial relations between the two continents has been greatly accentuated by the European War. Goods which South Americans had been buying in Europe must now be bought in North America. Money which could formerly be borrowed in almost any amount from European sources must now be sought from Canada and the United States. This fact involves us in responsibilities as well as in greater and closer commercial relations with South America. ¹²⁴

Samuel G. Inman realized clearly the impact that the War had for the economic interests of his country, as well as for the expansion of Protestantism in Latin America. He believed that the War had clarified the strategic necessity of the United States controlling the Caribbean.¹²⁵

As far as the religious bearing of the War was concerned, Inman thought that the closeness of the two regions of the continent meant that "the outlook for missionary work in Latin America was never so encouraging as at present".¹²⁶

One of the aspects that Protestants tried to exploit as part of the aftermath of the War was the bankruptcy, in their view, of European ideas. Protestants had always been aware of the hold that European ideas had on the educated people of Latin America. Latin Americans tended to over-appraise European culture and its approach to the

government of society. In this regard English and particularly French intellectual culture exercised great influence on the Latin American elites. In the nineteenth century Latin America felt very identified with France, as demonstrated by the respect that Auguste Comte's philosophy of positivism had in Latin America.¹²⁷

Now the War, according to North American Protestant missionaries, had demonstrated that those European progressive ideas were, in practice, ineffectual, and that Latin America, somehow or other, had to reckon with the cultural values of North America. Not only European values were in crisis, but also, and perhaps most important, the involvement of the United States in the conflict had revealed a new and more positive image of the country.

The fact that the United States took the side the of Latin America's friends, particularly France, was seen as a factor that could encourage the South to acknowledge the virtues of the North. As it was put, in the annual meeting of the CCLA, in 1917: "We have become the allies of France, and France has long been dear through cultural and racial ties to the Latin American republics of the new World. In other ways also we have achieved a new place in the affection of Latin America."¹²⁸

In a way the value of North American Christian ideals were contrasted positively with those of Europe. European Christian countries had embarked upon a bitter War in 1914, whereas the United

States had worked as a peacemaker. Thus Protestant missions could speak critically of the Christian testimony that European nations were offering the world.

In the Panama Congress, the Commission on Message and Method underlined this factor by saying that "some European Christian nations" (sic) had prompted the War. "The Great War, said the report, is yet "another superfluous demonstration that Christian nations do not love one another, and not a few have formulated the thought, that somehow this war is a negation of the Christianity of Europe". The report went on to quote the judgement on Europe by the prominent Japanese Christian, Dr.K.Ibuka. Ikuba at that time had impressed not only his fellow citizens but also the Missionary leaders of the West:

The civilisation of Europe has been pointed to in the East as preeminently Christian, and men are asking us Christians, Where is your God? Where is the kingdom of God which you proclaim as the supreme aim of life? Where is the brotherhood of man so often on your lips? What is the real value of Christianity to the world?.¹²⁹

In assessing the impact of the War, in so far as the relationship of the United States with Latin America was concerned, Protestants in Latin America echoed the mood of dissatisfaction that the war had caused among some Christian circles in Europe and in the United States. For example, J.H Oldham in Great Britain complained that the War had lowered the prestige of the West in the East.¹³⁰

In the United States the outbreak of the war had convinced civil and religious circles that their country was the only one upheld by God as a model to the world. This idea was stressed even more when the United States decided to take part in the war supposedly as the great peacemaker.

Against this background, Panamericanism was presented as good Christian testimony. The dream of the United States of cultivating good relations with the Latin American countries was contrasted with the war that European countries were having against each other.

Even a decade after the World War I North American Protestant missionaries still tended to take advantage of this sense of disillusion of Latin America with regard to Europe. The Commission on Un-Occupied Fields, for instance, alluded to this thus:

They were challenged at the outset by the general confession of Protestant Christendom that the cause of the War was the failure of Churches faithfully to live and to communicate, and of the so-called Christian nations adequately to apply the plain teachings of Christ. The disillusionment of the thinking classes regarding historical Christianity, as they knew it, was, of course, complete. But, might not new hope spring from a fresh realization of the pure gospel of the Great teacher.¹³¹

The good image of the United States in the eyes of Latin Americans after the War, according to Protestant missionaries, was based on the perception that the United States had taken an unselfish stand. Samuel G. Inman quoted an article in the leading Argentine

daily, La Nacion (July 4, 1917) in which the author praised the entrance of the United States into the war, speaking of it "as the supporter of the right...a nation engaged in a knightly war, an apostle in action."¹³²

The editor of La Nueva Democracia asserted, in 1920, that the United States participation in the War amazed the whole world, and that "the American colossus appeared as the champion of weak and oppressed countries and of the small nations".¹³³

Though Protestant missionaries in Latin America spoke confidently that the War had convinced Latin American countries of a new behaviour on the part of the United States, it is clear that this argument was basically rhetoric which reflected more their own view than of Latin Americans themselves. This same argument was used by them to convince Latin Americans that the United States was not the same imperialist power that in the past had invaded and seized territories in Latin America. In this context the editor of La Nueva Democracia wrote an apologetic article in 1922, entitled "Seamos Justos!" (Let us be fair) in which he emphatically argued that it was the best of ideals that had moved the United States to enter into the War. In it the decision of President Wilson was depicted as a "prophetic voice" that inspired their fellows to help in the "titanic tragedy".¹³⁴

Webster Browning, Presbyterian missionary, was also certain that the War had promoted a new rapprochement between North and South America. In his view the values of the North were gaining

ground among the educated classes, insofar as they were now going there to study, instead of to Europe. He suggested that the students going to North America experienced a sort of conversion, and often returned to their countries as "apostles of the interamerican friendship".¹³⁵ Further, he maintained that this change of attitude on the part of Latin Americans was not the result of commercial or diplomatic influence, but was rather the byproduct of the philanthropic idealism that had moved his country to join in the European confrontation. In this, Browning said that the world, and particularly Latin America, discovered that the God of the United States was not the dollar. This discovery was helping to turn the United States' enemies into friends. He believed that the War had achieved what commerce and diplomacy had been unable to do:

The true change has been brought about by spiritual values. The entrance of the United States into the War induced amazement and admiration in many people. The prompt way in which the United States' treasury was wide open to the extent of giving the allies more than \$10,000,000,000, and to spend in the war itself more than \$20,000,000,000 showed with deeds that the United States had not the dollar as her God. She had sacrificed a huge amount of money for the sake of peace. She prepared for the battle about 5,000,000 people and sent more than 2,000,000 optimistic and enthusiastic soldiers who were ready to die for the freedom and democracy of the world. This gesture opened the eyes of many who saw that the United States was not a nation of opportunists, but of altruists.¹³⁶

Inman also observed a new and more positive attitude of Latin America towards the United States, arising in the course of World War

I. He took pride in the fact that eight countries had now declared war on Germany: Brazil, Cuba, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. What Inman did not say, however, was that all these countries, except Brazil, are in the Caribbean region, that is to say, they were under the direct influence of the United States. In fact, for four of them --Cuba, Panama, Nicaragua, and Haiti --were virtual protectorates of the United States....¹³⁷

Pre-millennial missions, like the Central American Mission (CAM) which were already working in Latin America before the outbreak of the War also believed that the conflict heralded a new era for the world, though obviously they differed in not having an optimistic view on the conflict. The possibilities of an increasing activity of Protestantism in Latin America represented a prelude to the end of time. However, even pre-millennialist North American missionaries were aware of the fact that the War was turning their country into a world power. This is the case, for instance, with LeRoy McConnel, of the Central American Mission(CAM), for whom these two ideas appeared intertwined:

Many are praying and I believe the Lord has in store as a sequel to this war a great revival and time of reaping all over the world, maybe in quick completion of the church for our Lord's return. Are we ready and planning for it? Because of this war America finds herself confronted with an unequalled opportunity to gain trade not only in Latin America but all over the world. I am afraid she is not ready. Are we prepared to take hold of the opportunity and present the spiritual needs of the home church? it seems to me the

time is near for a rich harvest in these countries, but we are certainly not ready for it. This republic needs a great many more missionaries.¹³⁸

Robert Bender, also of CAM, noted that the War would strengthen North American interests in Latin America: "the whole American business world, is awakening to the value of Latin America. Side by side with this the religious world is beginning, at last, to realise her responsibility before God, for these people".¹³⁹

4. The natural richness of Latin America as an asset

4.1. Descriptions of Latin America as a rich land

It appears clear that before the Panama Congress (1916), North American Protestant missionaries, already working in Latin America, realized that their fate and the future of their plans were related to the greater commercial involvement of the United States in the region. The frequent allusions in Protestant writings to the material richness of Latin America reflected this.

Protestant people working in Latin America drew the attention of entrepreneurs to the variety of natural resources that the region possessed. This was done with objective of attracting capital to the region. Until now the United States had been unwilling to consider the whole region, with the exception of Mexico and other few countries, as coming under its economic influence. The perception of

the region as made up largely of Indians and unceasing social unrest contributed to this.

Protestant missionaries however were determined to break down this view of the South. In a Protestant religious tract, in 1910, it was described "as a glorious land in its material features....¹⁴⁰

Samuel G.Inman perceived, the First World War helped to overcome the old idea of Latin America as an area "made up of Indians and illiterates, with "little opportunity for our commerce". For him the War brought to light Chiles nitrate, Argentina's wheat, Mexico's oil, Brazil's coffee, Cuba's sugar, Bolivia's tin and Costa Rica's bananas. "Now, Inman said further, "businessmen are gradually awakening to the great error of such an opinion".¹⁴¹

Missionaries like Thomas Neely and Homer Stuntz frequently spoke of Latin American countries as "The land of El Dorado". In his book, South America: Its Missionary Problems,(1909), Neely referred to the variety and abundance presence of minerals such as gold, copper, diamonds, emeralds, nitrates, coal and petroleum. He was so impressed with the extent of these resources that he described them as "inexhaustible beyond the guess of the strongest imagination".¹⁴²

Homer Stuntz was still more graphic in his portrayal of Latin America. God had endowed these countries, as no other part of the earth, with minerals, fertile soil, forests, natural waterways, and climatic advantages. He went on:

Practically every one of the useful minerals is found there, and many of them in abundance. Gold is found in every South American state. The hills of the Guineas are still seamed with the yellow metal...Even in Tierra del Fuego, Indians wash out enough gold in a day to make good wages. Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Venezuela are rich in the precious metal. South America produces fifteen million ounces of silver annually...Copper is there in greater quantities than in the mines of Michigan, Montana, or Arizona...In one mine in Peru enough silver is mined with the copper to pay all the expenses of mining, shipping the ore to the coast, from the coast to the smelter in North America...If the diamond deposits in central Brazil were worked as efficiently as those of Kimberley, the splendor of the individual stones and the total yield would not suffer in comparison with its South African competitor...Colombia has the largest known deposits of emeralds ...Oil is found in several places.¹⁴³

As we noted in the first chapter, this was also an argument of British Protestant missionaries. SAMS, for instance, argued that the investment of foreign capital in Latin America would eventually help to forward Protestant work there.

Missionaries like Neely and Stuntz exploited the fear of the European interest in the region, something that had long created anxiety in the United States. They exhorted their contrymen that if they did not act promptly, European countries were ready to take advantage of those rich natural resources. For Stuntz, the threaten European intervention had started. In 1916, for instance, he observed that British capital, rather than North American, was getting profits from their investments in railway tracks in Argentina. He considered it wrong that United States businessmen failed to heed those, like William Wheelwright, who urged them to invest in Argentina.

In drawing attention to the British economic presence in Argentina, missionaries were well informed. Great Britain had a most privileged position in Latin America during most the nineteenth

century. It had played an important role during the mining boom of the 1880's. Yet while British businessmen were active in every Latin American country, more than one-third of the British capital that flooded Latin America went to Argentina, and Argentina was consistently the best customer for British manufactured goods. Great Britain, moreover, depended on Argentina for almost half its supply of beef.¹⁴⁴

In Stuntz's view Great Britain had done the right thing, for "when they had caught a glimpse of the profits to be made in freight and passenger traffic they poured out their gold".¹⁴⁵

With the intention of pressuring the powerful business interests in his country to action, Stuntz expressed his belief that in the near future "Europeans rather than North Americans will avail themselves of the resources of the southern continent".¹⁴⁶

All this indicates the extent of the interest of Protestant missionaries in linking their presence to that of North American capital in the region. Both Neely and Stuntz were sincerely to make the region a field for North American Protestant missions as well as for North American commercial interests. Neely, for instance, asked in one of his books: "How does South America rank among the continents as a field for the investment of capital?".¹⁴⁷ Stuntz even suggested answers to the question: "How can North American merchants get this trade?":

First, understand it. One thing that cannot be "made in North America" is knowledge of foreign markets. They must be studied on the ground. Second, we must have warehouses there. They cannot wait on shipments from Canada and the United States. Third, we must build up a Spanish-speaking selling agency.¹⁴⁸

Some Protestant missionaries were highly valued by

commercial companies for the knowledge that their long stay in the region had given to them. Furthermore, businessmen often sought to make the pioneers of Protestantism also pioneers in the introduction of North American goods into the region. Some Protestant missions, in their search for financial support, made contact with companies that already had business interests in Latin America, or were working towards the opening up of such markets.

Robert Speer believed that commercial firms had other reasons to contribute to Protestant mission work. W.R. Wheeler, Speer's biographer, noted that Speer went to Wall Street to search for money for the Panama Congress.¹⁴⁹ MacLean observed that "some Christian business men have recognized their duty and even non-Christian employers have assisted".¹⁵⁰

The Central American Mission (CAM), is an example of a Protestant mission which took advantage of business interests. They received financial aid from a company in Tennessee that produced agricultural machines, and very probably promoted the goods of this company among the landowners of the region, especially in Guatemala. In its Central American Bulletin, CAM mentioned the company as a partner in their mission to expand Protestantism in Central America. They referred to the owners of the company "as good Christians who loved the unadulterated Word and promoted the work of CAM in the region".¹⁵¹ In this context the argument of people like

the Presbyterian Missionary, Alexander Allen becomes clear. In discussing the Report on Survey and Occupation at the Panama Congress, he maintained that Colombia was especially dear to their hearts, because, among other things, "it has great rivers and mountains, and great mineral wealth, as well as other resources".¹⁵² The Protestant worker Levi Salmans, argued in Mexico in 1919, that "the opening up of trade" was among the benefits of Protestant evangelization.¹⁵³

4.2. Interdependence on raw materials

Missionaries like Neely, Stuntz, Clark, or Inman, in order to attract the investment of capital in the region, drew special attention to the material richness of the Latin American countries. Their understanding was that these countries could help the United States and European nations which were already exhausting their natural resources. "South America, said Neely, "will come to the aid of the older and more exhausted countries".

At the Panama Congress, Latin America was presented as an area in which the supply of food was increasing, and on which the world, (by which was meant the United States) would increasingly depend.¹⁵⁴ In line with this Samuel G. Inman, in 1921, stressed the importance of Latin America by underlining three of its features that could redound to the world's benefit: (1) that it had room for the

overcrowded population of the world; (2) it had power to produce food and raw products for the world; (3) it was a market place for the manufactured goods of the world.¹⁵⁵ A notable feature of this, according to Neely, was the foreign exploitation of minerals, like guano and nitrate, which were giving "fertility to the world's worn-out fields".¹⁵⁶

Further the fertility of Latin American lands was for them sufficient reason for North Americans to draw closer to the South and to take economic and cultural interchange seriously. They were clear that like it or not, their country would need the resources of the South and vice versa. Protestant missions saw reciprocity of trade as something inevitable. At the Montevideo Congress in 1925 it was expressed that this was a product of modern civilization which had made all the nations "extraordinarily inter-dependent":

They are interdependent for raw materials. No nation is completely supplied from within its own territories with all the varieties of mineral and vegetable products absolutely essential for its manifold industrial activities. Each nation secures from others, and also contributes to others.¹⁵⁷

Clark thought that as Latin America needed his country's manufactures, North America "needed the minerals, the coffee, the rubber, the cattle, and the precious woods of South America".¹⁵⁸ In this interchange between North and South, Protestant missionaries saw their work as part of the package that was coming from the North. In addition to the manufactures which North America could give in

return for raw materials, she could also offer what Clark called "the better gifts", namely, "a spiritual faith, a free Bible".¹⁵⁹ This echoed what P. A. Conard, of YMCA, said in the Panama Congress that "the time had come for free trade in moral resources."¹⁶⁰

Indeed not only Protestant missionaries, but also businessmen, looked on the Protestant religion as one of the goods that the North could export to the South. An example of this was William LaLecheur, a British businessman, considered in Protestant circles as "The father of Protestantism in Costa Rica" and among historians as the man who, in the nineteenth century, introduced Costa Rican coffee to the European market.¹⁶¹ After bringing their cargos of coffee to Europe, LaLecheur's ship would return loaded not only with British manufactures but also with Bibles.¹⁶²

4.3. The Christianising of commerce

Protestant missionaries thought that the new relationship that the United States was seeking with Latin America at the beginning of this century was based on most purposes. In thinking so, they acknowledged that their present mood signalled a shift from past behaviour and that their country had made mistakes.

The sound Christian principles that guided their own work often prevented them from perceiving the expansionist longings and imperialist purposes that also lay behind the new Latin American

policies of their country. They linked the welfare of Latin American countries with the investment of North American capital in the region. In doing so, Protestant missionaries transferred, unwittingly, their own good intentions to people whose sole aim was to gain profits regardless of the effect on Latin America.

Protestants missionaries were strongly committed to the view that the mistreatment Latin America had received from the United States must not occur again. They presented themselves in some measure as the monitors of a new relationship which would be based on fair dealing. They were sincerely committed to the spiritual and material welfare of the people to whom they had been sent.

Though the Protestants missionaries were, ideologically speaking, children of their epoch, they had no explicit intentions of contributing to imperialistic actions. This is no not to say that they did recognize that their country was getting benefits out of its new relationship with the South. Of course they did, but they thought it was part of a bargain from which both parties would benefit. In presenting themselves as the monitors of this relationship, they acknowledged the need to speak out if they saw that North American business was acting to the detriment of Latin American interests.

The people involved with the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America (CCLA) in forwarding Protestant work in Latin America were committed not only to the spiritual but also to material

welfare of Latin American countries. For them the interventions of their country in Latin America were motivated by the noblest intentions. This was the case of Francis Clark, for instance, who, in viewing the power that the Panama Canal had given to the United States in Latin America, pointed out that it would conduce to the benefit of both Americas and not just to his country. He put it thus:

Coveting no foot of South American territory, but desiring the best good of both Americas, one duty of North America is to send to the south land the best education, the best morality, the best religion which she herself possesses, for, by thus giving freely, she herself will be enriched, and the ideal of both halves of the great American continent will be ennobled.¹⁶³

Protestant missionaries not only strongly criticised the past attitudes of the government and of North American businessmen, while reminding all parties the fair deal that must now characterise the relationship of North and South.

Winton, Methodist missionary, for instance, said that North Americans had not in the past lived up to the responsibilities implied in being the "big brother" of Latin America. For him North Americans had not been good neighbours: "All sorts of adventurers have crossed the Rio Grande, some for their own and others for their country's good. Many who were not mere adventurers have been harsh and unsympathetic in their attitude toward the Mexicans".¹⁶⁴ In the Panama Congress it was admitted that Latin America had suffered from "northern aliens". These were described as "aggressive

commercial agents, the plundering type of concessionaires, overbearing, arrogant industrial managers and bosses, swaggering tourists, ill-bred consular and diplomatic representatives, and, occasionally, condescending missionaries.¹⁶⁵

Protestant missionaries were certain that the new state of affairs created by World War I was a great opportunity to create a better relationship between the North and South. However, Stuntz warned that North American business must avoid the temptation of taking advantage on unfair grounds: "We must secure the trade because it is there, not because the opposition is down and out. We must be sportsmen and stoop to nothing unworthy".¹⁶⁶ At the Panama Congress, E.T. Colton, in discussing the Commission on Survey and Occupation mentioned the fact that "commercialism" and "avarice" will be "overflowing the finer ideals of this civilization...destroying human sympathy."¹⁶⁷

This same concern was expressed at the annual meeting of the CCLA in 1918. There attention was drawn to the fact that the United States could not stress the commercial and political factors in its relationship with Latin America, otherwise, it would be relegating itself to a sphere "where selfishness is the motive". The report stressed that the opportunity now, after the War, was to bring before the people of Latin America the real idealism of the North American people.¹⁶⁸

Commerce was not bad in itself but it could be degraded by

immoral practices. In 1920 Josephus Shank, a North American Mennonite who invited his mission to consider working in Latin America, alluded to the problem of what he called "un-Christian commerce". Referring to North-American businessmen he thought that they must learn to bring only the best goods, represent them fairly, and deal in an honourable and frank manner with the South Americans.¹⁶⁹

4.4.. Dangers of financial betterment

The new commercial relationship that the United States had established with Latin American countries since the first decade of this century was a matter of concern for Protestant forces. This was so because they thought that the financial advantages that the South would gain could strengthen the materialism that, at an ideological level, was already gaining ground among the educated people. Protestant missionaries spoke, again and again, about the danger of a materialism that would emerge out of the great economic development and social welfare that Latin America was going to experience.

This view was obviously grounded on a false assumption, namely that Latin American countries were going to get financial benefit out of their relationship with the North. Protestant missionaries swallowed the renewed official discourse of their

government which claimed that the old imperialistic motivations were now part of history, and would never appear again. It never crossed their mind that the United States might be acting with the same old purposes. For them all pointed to a relationship, as was mentioned in the Panama Congress, shaped by intentions of "social amelioration and of moral regeneration...."¹⁷⁰ It was understood that this new juncture was drawing the North and the South closer, "to the advantage of both". The fact that the region, particularly after the opening of the Panama Canal and the First World War, was swamped with visiting North American diplomats and businessmen who paid lip service to solving the region's problems encouraged such beliefs.

The trips of Secretary of State, Elihu Root, in 1906 and 1907, to several countries had created great expectations. Protestants had been pleased with the impression that he eventually formed of the region. Root was quoted at the Panama Congress, as having said that "the United States had much to learn from South America".¹⁷¹ Elihu Root had succeeded Hay as Secretary of State in 1905, and formulated United States policies toward Latin America until 1910. Historians have pointed out that he had a different and more positive approach to Latin American affairs than his predecessors. In marked contrast to Hay, Root genuinely liked Latin Americans as individuals. He believed that the United States could gain hegemony in the region through peaceful means and not through imposition. "Patience," said

Root, "and a few years of a right kind of treatment, I am sure will give us in that part of the world the only kind of hegemony we need to seek or ought to want".¹⁷² He had an approach that Latin Americans liked, in the way he defined his country's interest in the region. Root expressed the US attitude toward these countries in three phrases:

First. We do not want to take them for ourselves; second, we do not want any foreign nations to take them for themselves; third, we want to help them.¹⁷³

To him is attributed the new closeness that Latin American countries experienced in the first decade of this century, and the making of the Panamerican conferences as matters of real importance.¹⁷⁴ Protestant missionaries perceived and were pleased with this attitude.

The financial development of Latin America as a result of the investment of North American capital was, in the view of Protestant missionaries, something inevitable. The encounter of the capital from the North with the natural and mineral resources of the South would guarantee a better future for Latin American region. Neely was one that firmly believed so:

These are mere hints as to the natural wealth and the possibilities of South America, but they are sufficient to show that South America is destined to have great development. Already rapid development is in progress. Much yet is faulty among the people, and there are many defective conditions, but marked improvement is going on, both of a material and a political character. The world is coming into closer touch

with South America, and it is becoming more and more attractive and accessible to the people of Europe and the other Americas. South America will have a great future.¹⁷⁵

This new understanding of Latin America is reflected clearly in Protestant people like Francis Clark who referred to the region as being "near the head of the progressive continents".¹⁷⁶ Or the description of the region by a Protestant who said that Latin America was "pressing forward like a young one in the race of progress" and that the region that was "pressing forward in the rivalry of commerce with the nations of the North".¹⁷⁷

In claiming the welfare of Latin America as a byproduct of its relationship with their country, Protestant missionaries echoed the mood that their government encouraged at home, after Spanish American War and especially after the building of the Panama Canal.

In going to war against Spain in 1898, the United States claimed that it was helping their southern neighbours, the Cubans to get out from the Spanish yoke. As for the building of the Panama Canal, Protestants maintained it would strengthen the wealth of both the North and of the South . It was an enterprise, as Clark asserted, "destined largely to revolutionise the commerce of the world, and more than any modern factor, to influence the fortune of the nations".¹⁷⁸

Clark's emphasis on the financial advantages of the Panama Canal for Latin America was not surprising. President Wilson had also

made this point in the Commercial Congress that North American businessmen interested in Latin America held in 1913. There he argued that the Panama Canal would emancipate the region from the high rates of interest which, because of insecurity, were imposed on imported goods. Further, President Wilson promised, what Latin American governments had long demanded, namely, that the relationship between the North and the South would be reconstructed on a basis of equality. In line with this, he assured Latin Americans that the United States "will never again seek an additional foot of territory by conquest".¹⁷⁹

The belief in the arrival of a new era was not only reflected in the speech of the Minister of Panama to the United States, at the Commercial Congress of 1913: :

One of these transformations will be undoubtedly, the disappearance of the prejudices which unfortunately exist among the people of Latin American origin with respect to the spirit and tendencies of the people of the United States... In Panama these sister nations will see the spectacle of a proximity where no fear exists, and they will become convinced of the fact that contact with this nation of another race does not offer any danger, but only advantages, benefits, and teachings.¹⁸⁰

A Commission at the Panama Congress declared that the new closeness of the North with the South "would surely hasten the development of the industrial revolution".¹⁸¹

However Protestant missionaries did not believe that the promising future of Latin American countries rested only on what

these countries could get from the United States; rather, those countries already had the material conditions that would lead to their social development:

In making out the case for South America as a field of missionary opportunity, it is concluded, that in a continent so roomy and so rich, another century will witness a greater growth in population and a more rapid significant political and social development than will take place in any other part of the world.¹⁸²

In a word, Latin America had the same, or even better conditions than those that had enable Europe and North America to experience the industrial revolution.

The commission that reported on "The Evangelical Churches and the Social Gospel" at Panama emphasized this maintaining that the combination of foreign money and the "virgin resources" of Latin America was the magic formula that would result in the economic transformation of these countries:

There are also great mineral resources in Latin America which are undeveloped, and there is vast wealth in its tropical forests, while the possible electrical power of its remarkable river systems is another great asset. That the inevitable development of these great natural resources will be rapid is evident: (1) because it has been in great progress for some years and billions of foreign capital have already been invested in it. (2) Because the present rate of growth of the world's population means that every ten years there will be upwards of 160,000,000 additional mouths to feed. (3) Because the standard of living is rapidly rising all over the civilized world, which correspondingly increases the demand for all the appliances of civilized life, and for all sorts of raw material (4) because under normal conditions capital which seeks foreign investments is rapidly increasing in the world's chief monetary centers. (5) because Latin American cities are

eager to acquire all the material advantages of the new civilization, and the holders of natural resources are more than willing to dispose of concessions for immediate wealth. For the above reasons there can be little doubt that Latin America will enjoy a period of marked expansion during the first half of the twentieth century.¹⁸³

The introduction of North American capital and expertise was advocated. In doing so, the United States would give to Latin America what the colonial experience had denied it, "initiative, enterprise and energy, [the] requisites to organising new and great business undertakings".¹⁸⁴

The religious importance of these circumstances rested, as Protestants saw it, on the fact that the industrial revolution, as it spread in Latin America, would challenge all social, moral, and religious values: "socialism, syndicalism and anarchism, new rights, new duties, new opportunities, new responsibilities, new needs, new perils -all these go to make up the great social problem so characteristic of our times".¹⁸⁵ For this reason some Protestant missionaries linked with the CCLA believed that in order to avoid the conflicts that this industrial development had caused elsewhere, they had to press hard for the introduction of a new set of religious values. Otherwise religion could not meet the challenge of a society in transition from a predominantly agricultural economy to an industrial one, in which the next generation in Latin America will be living in a very different world from that of their forbears.¹⁸⁶

In 1916, J.H.McLean, a Presbyterian Missionary in Chile, argue that a better future for Latin America was coming as a result of North American investment of capital, enabling the South to "increase [its production] tenfold within a generation". The money that North America was beginning to lend "was for the benefit of nations that are poorer in capital and equipment but rich in latent resources".¹⁸⁷ In this context it is not surprising that might come to predominate in a society experiencing such a rapid economic transformation. They admitted that Christianity had been unable to deal with the challenge of industrialism in the United States and in Europe. In its attempts it had lost out, and many lost interest in it. Therefore they argued that Christianity in Latin America must be prepared to deal with the challenges:

These new social problems complicated moral and religious problems... They raise new questions of practical morals...Wherever the influence of the new social civilization has penetrated, whether in Great Britain, Continental Europe or the United States, the tendency has been to loosen the hold of the churches on workingmen; and this has been true not only of Protestant Churches, but also of the Roman Catholic and of the Greek Catholic, ever since the middle of the nineteenth century. There is no reason to suppose that the influence of the new social revolution will be exceptional in Latin America unless indeed the fact that it is imported and the conditions under which it comes serve to make it exceptionally trying.¹⁸⁸

Protestants missionaries feared that the drift away from Christianity already prevalent among the Latin American educated

classes. At the annual conference of the CCLA in 1918, delegates interpreted theologically, the challenge that industrialisation posed for them:

Now again the same voice is saying: 'Behold I have set before thee, an open door' A new industrial era calling for profound social readjustments; the opening of new commercial relations with North America on a scale that staggers the imagination; rapid economic development in the more progressive republics; the opening of the Panama Canal; the impulses of a new Pan-Americanism needing spiritual guidance; the call of millions who have cut all religious cables, and are adrift without chart or compass; and the overthrow of religious intolerance in its last citadel within the last six months, unite with the world changes caused by the Great War, in an imperious call from our King to give South America spiritual help...."And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me.¹⁸⁹

Missions like EUSA thinking that the peril of revolt in Latin America could be met just by a dynamic presentation of Jesus Christ.¹⁹⁰

Conclusion

We have seen that the development and expansion of Protestantism in Latin America cannot be understood apart from the colonial expansion of the United States in the region, and that Protestant missionaries realised that their success depended in part on the cultural and commercial influences of the North on the South. In short the "continent of opportunity", as far as the Protestant presence was concerned, meant commercial as well as religious opportunity. It

was the end of the Spanish-American War that led Protestant missionary societies, and not, as in the past, individuals, to take to heart the need for the expansion of Protestantism in the region.

Though naive in their understanding of the contribution of the United States, and especially its Protestantism, to Latin American countries, Protestant missionaries believed that they were the guarantors of a new and more sound relationship between the North and the South. Thus Protestantism should make every effort to resist the secularism that would come with the economic benefits that these countries were soon to experience. To meet this challenge Latin America had to undergo a religious renewal that, according to the missions, only Protestantism could provide. They believed that the condition of the Roman Catholic Church, no longer a power, was preparing the way for the coming of a dynamic Protestant movement.

Chapter III

Panama Congress as the Start of a Great Protestant Movement (Latin America no Longer Neglected)

Introduction

The Panama Congress held in 1916 can be considered as a watershed, the beginning of a new era of Protestant propagation in Latin America. It is the end of a period in which Protestant work was seen as illegitimate because of the Roman Catholic presence, and the beginning of a conscious and determined effort by the largest North American Protestant missionary societies to extend their work to the south of the continent. Before the Panama Congress the presence of Protestantism depended, with some exceptions, on the initiative of individuals, who were later supported by their respective denominations. At Panama we see most important Protestant churches and missionary leaders working together to further Protestantism. Well informed on past Protestant work, the organisers of the Panama Congress saw themselves as inaugurating of an essential and important enterprise. The triumphalism of their view was clear.

In order to understand the religious principles that motivated the organisers we will pay special attention to the addresses given at Panama. Though there are have been some studies of the origin and importance of the Congress, they all depend almost literally on the three official volumes of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin

America(CCLA), Christian Work in Latin America (1917), and especially on Mott's analysis on "the Inception and History of the Congress." We shall focus particularly on these.

With regard to the critics of the CCLA and Panama Congress we will depend largely on the assessment that John Fox made in The Princeton Theological Review in 1917: "Christian Unity, Church Unity, and the Panama Congress"

3.1. En route to the Panama Congress

"When the history of the last twenty five years of Protestant work in Latin America is written, Christians would realize how important was the role played by the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America." This statement was made by Dr. Stanley Rycroft in his book Sobre Este Fundamento (1942).¹

He uttered these words having in mind the Evangelical Conferences called by the CCLA in Montevideo(1925) and in Havana(1929), and the recognition that the ecumenical movement, through the International Missionary Council, had given to the Latin American Protestant churches by that time.

Rycroft was a British missionary who arrived in Latin America in 1922 under the auspices of the Free Church of Scotland. There, he worked as a teacher in El Colegio Anglo-Peruano for 14 years (1926-1940). In 1940 he succeeded Dr. Samuel Guy Inman as executive secretary of the CCLA.

Rycroft was right when he stressed the important part played by CCLA in the history of Protestantism in Latin America. We would go even further by saying that any history of Protestant work in Latin America that did not include the work of the CCLA is by no means complete. In saying so, we are passing judgment on most of the works that have been written so far on the history of Protestant work in Latin America. For the CCLA has been overlooked in studies of the penetration of Protestantism into these countries.

Though it is true some efforts towards the introduction of Protestantism into Latin America can be identified in the nineteenth century, it is also true that these were sporadic and unorganized. The strengthening and expansion of those efforts belonged to the twentieth century and are closely intertwined with the work of CCLA.

The origin of the CCLA as we have said earlier is connected with the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, even though Latin America did not appear in its agenda. Dr. Robert Speer was one that sought to see work in Latin America discussed as part of the Edinburgh Conference. Its omission silenced the advocates of Latin America at Edinburgh, but the spirit of the conference stimulated them towards taking further action which led to the forming of the CCLA in 1913. Later when its leaders wrote on the CCLA's origin, they always associated it with the Edinburgh conference.

For Speer it was quite clear that the origin of the CCLA was part of the Edinburgh Conference. He made this point before in the Twenty-

Third Conference of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America held in 1916. The fact that this conference was held previous to the Panama Congress helped the advocates of Protestant work in Latin America to spell out their plans for the event in Panama. Speer put the coming event in historical perspective. He said the CCLA, following on Edinburgh, had first emerged out of the meeting called in 1913, by the Committee on Reference and Counsel of the Foreign Missions of North America. At it a committee was appointed, later known as the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America (CCLA). For Speer, this was read the fulfilment of the commitment they had made at Edinburgh: "The first step towards the fulfilling of that promise".²

The meeting that witnessed the birth of the CCLA was held in New York in 1913. It was attended mainly by representatives of those North American boards that had workers in Latin America. According to Speer, nobody had given any thought to the what would be the outcome.

Nobody had given any forethought whatever to what might follow that conference. With absolute spontaneity the conference itself in the closing fifteen minutes, when it was clear that it was to come to an end without any provision for the continuance of its work, appointed a little committee with the understanding that the committee might increase its numbers to represent the missionary agencies most interested in these fields.³

Harlam P. Beach, professor of practical theology and missions at Yale, who was another advocates of Protestantism in Latin America,

also saw the meeting of 1913 in that way. He became one of the leaders of the Panama Congress, and the first to write on the event. In his Renaissant Latin America(1917), he recounted the process that led to the event. For him the 1913 meeting grew out of the efforts of those "many friends of Latin America" who had attended the Edinburgh Conference, and who thought that in the future "there should be held a conference at which the claims of Latin America should be considered".⁴ The original membership of the committee included: Dr. Robert Speer as chairman, L.C. Barnes, Ed. F.Cook, William F. Oldham and John W.Wood. The committee's task was clear enough: "to deal with the whole subject of the work in Latin America and especially with the question of cooperation, and to make any presentation they deemed desirable to the Boards".⁵

The meeting of 1913 was in one sense a sign that North Americans, as far as the religious situation of Latin America was concerned, were not able to follow the European view. Probably most important, it was the first strong expression that future work in Latin America would be part of the responsibility of the North American Protestant boards.

3.2. First actions of the CCLA:

The first action that the CCLA took was the calling of a meeting in January 1914, to deal with the situation in Mexico due to "the long insurrection there". Many of the Protestant missionaries had had to

leave the country because of the anti North American feelings. At the meeting, it was decided that the committee of five increase its membership with representative of each board and agency doing work in Latin America. Thus the committee was enlarged by adding thirteen additional members.

The next action taken by the CCLA was the issuing of a letter, dated 14 February, 1914 to Protestant missionaries working in the region. First, the purpose and programme of the CCLA was stated; second, it aimed at sounding out the opinion of missionaries in Latin America with regard to the holding of one of two regional conferences, one on the northern portion and one on the southern portion of Latin America; and third, it asked what should be the nature of such conferences--that is, should they be conferences "of missionary leaders for the study of important missionary problems; or one of leaders and missionaries, organized with a view to beginning a great evangelistic campaign throughout Latin America".⁶ As matter of fact the conference was anything but the second option. The CCLA was better able to explore social issues as main hindrances for the propagation of Protestantism, than to offer religious alternatives as the revivalists had done in the North American context. This led to disillusionment among some missionaries regarding the course that the CCLA took once it was accepted in Latin America.

The letter was widely circulated especially by Samuel Guy Inman of the Christian Woman's Board of Missions who was already

working in Mexico, and it brought about important meetings in Latin America. The one in Montevideo is regarded as the most important of these. It was held in June 1914 under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association. Primarily organized by and on behalf of the secretaries of the Young Men's Christian Association in Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile, it included a number of leading missionaries in South America. It was thus the first international missionary conference ever held in South America, and proved invaluable as a means of indicating the proper organization of the greater Conference that was to come later.⁷ In line with the work of the YMCA, the gathering stressed the need to work with both students and the educated classes.⁸

It is worth noting that the topics of this meeting defined the approach that the CCLA would have on Latin America after the Panama Congress in 1916. Indeed the CCLA never managed to switch from this emphasis, and this helps explain why the CCLA never fulfilled the expectations of those in the field who wanted a more aggressive, forceful, and zealous approach to the religious situation of Latin America. The meeting at Montevideo in 1914 was important in confirming that the need for a larger continental conference in which representation "should be limited to leaders who had given their time to the study of missionary problems."⁹

This team was soon assuming more and more power over decisions concerning Latin America. The enlarged committee

convened a Cincinnati meeting in Cincinnati, between June 30 to July 1, 1914, and invited delegations from most boards that were doing work in Mexico; including American Baptist Foreign Missions Society, American Bible Society, American Boards of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Christian Woman's Board of Missions, American Friends' Board of Foreign Missions, Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, Board of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and the International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations.¹⁰

The CCLA used the Mexican crisis to discuss mainly the territorial division of the country among Protestant missions. "Readjustment" was the watchword of the conference. The report of "Survey and Occupation" at the Panama Congress referred to that meeting of Cincinnati thus:

In the summer of 1914, a large and representative body of missionaries and administrative secretaries employed the occasion enforced by the general suspension of activities on the field to face courageously the existing problems of Mexico's occupation treated as a unit in the hope that their findings would afford the basis of more enlightened and concentrated action upon the resumption of normal activities.¹¹

In Cincinnati, the committee that worked on territorial division drew attention to what they called "the inadequacy of the missionary force available". Delegates were surprised to learn that

there was an average of one Protestant missionary, including wives, to every 70,000 of the Mexican population. and that fourteen states of Mexico, with a population of over 5,000,000, had no resident missionaries.¹² In view of this, the CCLA recommended a redistribution of the missionary forces, and suggested a new division of the country among the following denominations considered "as responsible for the occupation and missionary cultivation": Congregationalists, Baptists, Friends, Methodists, Associated Reformed Presbyterians, and Presbyterians.¹³ The nature of such territorial division was described as of "a sweeping character, readjusting the territorial boundaries of a number of missions and achieving many practical plans for cooperation".¹⁴

1914 was the busy year for the CCLA. After issuing the letter and holding the meetings it prompted, the organisation moved to formalised its existence. This happened on September 22, 1914 in New York. This meeting was the first that the enlarged CCLA convened. Fifteen boards were represented and its formal organization was completed by the election of Dr. Robert E. Speer as chairman, of Dr. William F. Oldham as vice-chairman, and Dr. Lemuel C. Barnes as recording secretary. The meeting also agreed to hold the Panama Congress.

Once Panama was decided on several decisions were taken. Firstly, a Committee on Arrangements was appointed which was composed by Dr. William F. Oldham, Chairman, Dr. C.L. Thompson,

Mr.E.T. Colton and Mrs.Anna R. Atwater. Then Robert Speer was asked to ask the Christian Woman's Board of Missions to release Samuel Guy Inman as full time executive secretary of the CCLA. The Christian Woman's Board of Missions generously agreed to continue granting his salary while he was working with the CCLA. Thirdly, an office was opened in the Presbyterian Building, at 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, on November 5, 1914. Finally a letter was sent to European Missionary Boards doing work in Latin America asking for their help in shaping the Congress. In response to this latter, boards in Great Britain named their committee as follows: Sir Andrew Wingate,Chairman, Rev.John Ritson, Secretary, Rev. C.W.Andrews, Rev. Alan Ewbank, Rev. Bishop Hasse. Rev. C.J. Klesel, John Davidson, Charles Earle, Charles May, Peter F. Wood.

Once the exact date of the event was decided, the eight following commissions were appointed with their chairman and vice-chairman: (1) Survey and Occupation: E. T. Colton and C.W Andrews (2) Message and Method: William Cabell Brown and Douglas Mackenzie and Andrew Wingate (3) Education: Donald C. MacLaren, Ernest D. Burton, Henry Churchill King (4)Literature: Andres Osuna, John H. Ritson, James Wood (5)Women's work: Miss Belle H. Bennett, Mrs Ida W. Harrison (6) The Church in the Field:Bishop Homer C. Stuntz, Arthur J. Brown, Bishop Hasse, Walter R. Lambuth (7) Home Base: Harry Wade Hicks, G. Campbell Morgan (8) Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity: Charles L. Thompson, and Henry Haigh.

During 1915 the CCLA earnestly prepared for the Panama Congress. Every missionary board at work in Latin American countries received a report. Also every British and Canadian missionary society at work in these countries responded favourably to the plan, and expressed their desire to send delegates.¹⁵

It was not until the meeting of the Foreign Missions Conference in Garden City, L.I. in January, 1915 that the CCLA publicly announced the Congress. There, the CCLA leaders had a session to share plans and ideas regarding the event. Dr. Robert Speer, Dr. William Oldham, Dr. John R. Mott, Dr. T. B. Ray, Bishop Arthur S. Lloyd and Rev. Samuel Guy Inman took part.¹⁶

Another important meeting in the run-up to the Panama Congress was the conference held at Caldwell, N.J. on June 9-10, 1915, which was attended by the chairmen of the eight commissions, members of their executive committees and the members of the Committee on Arrangements. By this time the organisers had received many of the answers to questionnaires that had been sent to Latin America. Indeed the response of Latin America to the requests was immense. Chile was an example of the welcome that missions fields gave to the announcement of the event. The people working in Chile sent to the Commission on Education one hundred pages relating to the state of education in Chile. With this kind of information the reports of the commissions were drafted, and then reviewed and adjusted at the Caldwell meeting.

There, once for all, was spelt out the nature of the Panama Congress. This was put in what was known as the "Caldwell Resolution" as follows:

"Resolved", that this Conference strongly recommends that those who are making arrangements for the Panama Conference, as well as all writers and speakers at the Conference, bear in mind that, if the best and most lasting results are to be obtained, while frankly facing moral and spiritual conditions which call for missionary work in Latin America, and while presenting the gospel which we hold as the only adequate solution of the problems which those conditions present, it shall be the purpose of the Panama Conference to recognise all the elements of truth and goodness in any form of religious faith. Our approach to the people shall be neither critical nor antagonistic, but inspired by the teachings and example of Christ and by that charity which thinketh no evil and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth. In the matter of Christian service, we will welcome the co-operation of any who are willing to cooperate in any part of the Christian program. We should not demand union with us in all our work as the condition of accepting allies for any part of it.¹⁷

As we will see later, missionaries in Latin American did not like this resolution. It seemed to them that the CCLA wanted to make some sort of compromise with the Roman Catholic Church. The other decision taken at Caldwell that also bothered the Latin American constituency was the change of the name of the event. The CCLA originally presented it as a "Latin American Missionary Conference". However some perceived that this title could annoy the educated classes whom the CCLA as the "locus theologicum" of their religious approach. They believed that national churches as well missionary boards wanted to avoid the term "missionary" and they therefore suggested a more neutral name: "Congress on Christian Work in Latin

America". 18

Another decision of Caldwell was the appointment of an Advisory Committee made up of fourteen members. John R. Mott, Josiah Strong, Francis E. Clark, Jose Carlos Rodriguez, and G. Campbell Morgan were included in its membership. It was believed that the appointment of people of this stature "seemed highly advisable to promote by their cooperation, and by their presence, if possible, the wide range of discussion and the free exchange of values of all kinds".¹⁹

The final meeting of interest before the Panama Congress was the that of the Committee on Arrangements on August 6, 1915. The CCLA still had concern over the nature of the Congress. They were interested in putting the objectives of the congress in such a way as would cause the least harm. There were many who had doubts on whether an event of this sort would benefit or damage religious interests in Latin America. Bearing this in mind the following statement was adopted:

Realizing the ever-increasing interdependence of the civilizations of the world, and especially those of North and of Latin America, as well as those of both with that of the continent of Europe, the Congress at Panama has been called in order:

First: To obtain a more accurate mutual knowledge of the history, resources, achievements and ideals of the peoples so closely associated in their business and social life.

Second. To reveal the fact that the countries may mutually serve one another by contributing the best in their civilizations to each other's life.

Third. To discover and devise means to correct such defects and weaknesses in character as may be hindering the growth

of those nations.

Fourth. To unite in a common purpose to strengthen the moral, social, and religious forces that are now working for the betterment of these countries, and to create the desire for these things where absent.

Fifth. To discover the underlying principles upon which true national prosperity and stability depend, and to consider ways and means by which these principles may be put into action and made effective.²⁰

The meeting revived a thorny problem that had been present since the outset of the preparation for the event, namely what was going to be the stand with regard to the Roman Catholic Church? This issue was indeed problematic, not only in the light of the theological conservatism of the Latin American constituency that was supporting the event, but also because of the damage that sectarian conflict might inflict on the "Pan-American movement" that the United States was promoting in Latin America. This was really a dilemma. Protestant Missionaries in Latin America wanted the Congress to address in a confrontational way the religious control of the Roman Catholic Church in the region. Yet the CCLA recognised that this attitude could drive away the people they wanted to reach, that is, the educated sections in Latin America. In this framework, the meeting agreed to invite the Roman Catholic Church to take part in the event:

All communions or organizations which accept Jesus Christ as Divine Saviour and Lord, and the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the revealed Word of God, and whose purpose is to make the will of Christ prevail in Latin America, are cordially invited to participate in the Panama Congress, and will be heartily welcomed.²¹

Although the organisers of the Panama Congress faced many

discouraging obstacles, they press forward. It seemed that nothing could stop them from fulfilling their dream, the dream of an international event devoted to discussing the religious situation of Latin America. This was a dream that was also understood as God's will; and the organisers viewed the obstacles as simply further evidence that the Congress was in God's hands. Speer applied to their plans what Paul had said with regard to Ephesus: "A great door and effectual has been opened unto me and there are many adversaries. Watch ye. Stand fast in the faith. Quit you like men. Be strong. Let all that ye do, be done in love." He went on:

Those who have been in contact with plans for this Latin American missionary gathering from the time of their first inception have the clear assurance that what they have watched and worked with, has been in the will of God, and they have had from the beginning, and have now, with regard the Congress the confidence which comes from that assurance. 22

Speer was convinced that obstacles and problems were part and parcel of any enterprise that he had dreamed of. He went on: It goes without saying that no plan of this kind can be made without encountering difficulties. When did men ever attempt to do anything that was worth doing that they did not encounter difficulties? If we had not encountered any difficulties in connection with the plans for this congress, the appropriate thing would be for us to vote that the congress should not be held, for we would have had unanswerable

evidence that it could not be the will of God that such a conference should assemble. Anything that is the will of God is bound to encounter impediments and hindrances in the world in which we do our work. I think we may go further than that. The very difficulties encountered in the plan for this conference, as we work towards its expected consummation, are the very reasons why this conference must be held. If anything could show that it is indispensable, it is these very difficulties with which we have met. For these difficulties are here precisely to test the faith with which we have entered on this undertaking, and to prove our courage as to whether it is really Christian, apostolic courage.... The presence of difficulties did not qualify this opportunity; they constituted it.... The difficulties which we face in this work are here to prove the reality of our love for the Latin American people and the genuineness of our convictions with regard to the work being done. For not a single difficulty has arisen in connection with this congress that our missionaries in Latin America have not faced from the beginning.²³

Furthermore the sense of duty, emergency and necessity that surrounded the organization of the Panama Congress was related to the impact that it was destined to have on the people in Latin America. The congress was symbol that Latin America was, as far as the Protestant presence there was concerned, a continent no longer neglected but a "continent of opportunity".

Dr. Thornton B. Penfiel, of the Committee on Arrangements,

focused on the immediate effect that the event would have on the diverse population of Panama. For him, God had blessing in store not only for the 20,000 Jamaican blacks resident in Panama, and the 40,000 native Panamanians, but also for the 4,000 Americans. A large part of the people of Panama were nominally Catholics but in reality without church affiliation; while many of the Americans were drifting away from church privileges and sabbath observance, and needed a spiritual awakening.²⁴

The opening session of the Congress took place on February 10, 1916 with Dr. William F. Oldham as Chairman of the Committee on Arrangements. That day Dr. Speer gave the address on "Our attitude and Spirit". The Government of Panama greeted the Congress through its Minister of Foreign Affairs, Senor Lefevre. He praised the importance of events such as the Panama Congress, which help to bring to Panama "elements of the highest civilization to which all good citizens aspire".²⁵

The Conference was meant to be the beginning of a process, and the CCLA was constituted as a sort of "Committee of Continuation" of the Panama Congress. This decision was "the most tangible evidence that the Congress was not considered an end in itself in that it set about to bring things to pass through the creation of a continuation committee".²⁶ Yet the CCLA could not be the same as it had been before the Congress. What was required now was to enlarge the Committee and its activities. It was made clear that the functions of the

CCLA were consultative and advisory, not legislative and mandatory. The resolution that called for the reorganization of the CCLA can be summarised as follows: First, with regard to the composition of the Committee, it was to be enlarged as follows: (1) An American and Canadian Section composed of one representative of each mission agency of the United States and Canada which is sending and maintaining missionaries in Latin America. (2) A European Section composed of one representative of each mission agency of Great Britain and of the Continent of Europe which is sending and maintaining missionaries. (3) Ex-officio members consisting of the chairman and the secretary of the committee or council representing the Missions and Churches of each country or group of countries in Latin America. Second, that the American and Canadian Section, and also the European section, have an annual meeting. Third, that the American and European Sections of the Committee shall each have an Executive Committee numbering approximately one-third of the total membership of the section. Fourth, that the Executive Committee of each Section shall, as a rule, meet once each quarter to carry out the general policy and instructions of the section. Fifth, that the organization of the European missionary societies be postponed on account of World War I, though the hope was expressed the European cooperation would develop as rapidly as possible. Sixth, that the American and Canadian Sections take prompt steps to carry out the findings of the Congress. Seventh, that the common actions between

North American and European sections be worked out after the European section had been organized. Eighth, that the ex-officio members representing the Latin American committees be regarded as eligible to attend the meetings of both the North American and European Sections.²⁷

The spirit of the Panama Congress was also preserved through the Regional Conferences that their organisers had decided to carry out immediately after the Congress. These were meant to convey to different constituencies in Latin America the findings and achievements of the Congress, and to suggest the means for their adoption. The schedule of such conferences was described by Inman thus:

The day after the Panama convention adjourns a deputation consisting of some twenty prominent Christian leaders, - we hope one representative from each mission board doing work in South America- will start from Panama down the west coast, stopping first at Lima, to have regional conference there. Then, going next to Santiago, they are to cross the Andes to Buenos Aires.. They will then proceed up the east coast to Rio Janeiro and go from there back to New York, arriving on the second or third of May. Another deputation will leave Panama immediately and, going to Cuba, thence crossing by the Ward line to Vera Cruz will go to Mexico City to hold a conference there. Another deputation will go immediately to Colombia and move on to Barranquilla. So we touch the greatest centres with these regional conferences.

28

As a matter of fact these meetings were "Panama Congresses" in miniature. They were decisive in clarifying the doubts of those boards in Latin America that due to some disagreement had opted not to take part. Harlam P. Beach, of Yale University, and a member of the

Executive committee of the Panama Congress has recorded in his Regional Conferences in Latin America, (1917) the main features of those conferences.

3.3 Impact of the Panama Congress

The CCLA's leaders based their plans on the belief that the Roman Catholic Church lacked the necessary courage and efficacy to meet the expectations of Latin American people. But their judgement fell not only on the official church but also on the efforts of the Protestant churches. At the time of the Panama Congress Protestantism had a history in the region of more than fifty years.

Though it was acknowledged that their predecessors had had to undergo many troubles in their attempts to introduce their religious' approach, the CCLA depicted those efforts as a failure. The CCLA's criticism towards the past efforts of Protestant work in Latin America appears quite understandable, given that their leaders were in touch with the extraordinary progress that Protestant missions were having in some parts of Asia and Africa. Though they were well aware that Latin America had not been part of the missionary strategy in the same way as those other continents had been, they believed that the Protestant forces already in the region could have done better. Thus they were hardly satisfied with the upbeat reports of those missionaries in the field who believed that Protestantism had had some real achievements.

The key contrast is that CCLA leaders compared the progress of Protestantism in Latin America with that in other fields, while Protestant missionaries valued their success in relation to the limitations that Latin America presented to missionary work. In 1909 Bishop Neely commented on the progress of Protestant work so far. In defining what Protestantism had accomplished in Latin America, he underscored four things. (1) In comparison with fifty years ago, Protestantism had secured a foothold in every important city; (2) It had put across a new meaning of Christianity as a simple and pure religion of the real Jesus; (3) It had shown the existence of religious diversity, in the sense that there is a religion that is not Roman Catholic; (4) It had helped to hold European, American, and other Protestants residing in South America true to the faith of their fathers.²⁹

However in the wake of the great expectations that the CCLA had for Latin America these achievements were meagre. Stuntz, in 1916, spoke of the "impotency of the Established Church as a means of imparting spirituality" but also of the inability of the existent Protestant forces to fill that vacuum on account of "the feebleness of our constructive efforts to render aid".³⁰

Thus the Panama Congress was an indictment of Latin American Christianity, regardless of religious background. There was no Christian force capable of initiating the religious revival that the CCLA wished Latin America to experience. This reality was reflected in the small number of Protestant missionaries in the region, described at

the Panama Conference as follows:

Central America and Mexico:

Mexico 19, British Honduras 4, Canal Zone 3, Costa Rica 4, Guatemala 7, Honduras 7, Nicaragua 4, Panama 6, Salvador 3.

South America: Argentina 21, Bolivia 7, Brazil 17, British Guiana 14, Chile 11, Colombia 3, Dutch Guiana 3, Ecuador 6, Paraguay 9, Peru 8, Uruguay 8, Venezuela 7.

West Indies: Bahama Islands 6, Cuba 12, Haiti and Santo Domingo 8, Jamaica 13, Lesser Antilles 11, Puerto Rico 17, West Indies (islands not designated) 6.³¹

Charles Thompson, who had taken part in the Panama Congress, referred to the Congress as the starting point for correcting the failure of Christianity in the region. The Panama Congress, for him, had started a process which, on the one hand, would give Latin America what had been denied to it: "a type of life, and an inheritance of reformation truth", and on the other hand, would confront the relative failure of fifty years of Protestant mission work in Latin America".³²

As far as the development of Protestantism in Latin America is concerned, the Panama Congress a major step forward. The positive impact of the event can be measured not only in quantitative terms, but also for its qualitative contribution. By this latter we mean the psychological effect on Protestant missionaries who somehow or other felt that Latin America was a proper mission field. The decision of the Edinburgh Conference was still fresh in their memories. Inman became aware of this psychological effect of the Panama Congress during a trip that he made to several countries in the region in 1917. In a letter to Dr. Speer from the Dominican Republic, he wrote that

"conditions have shifted rapidly both in the evangelical work and in general in Latin America since the holding of the Panama Congress in 1916".³³ Further, he maintained that "the Panama Conference settled once for all the questions of the legitimacy of evangelical mission work in Latin America, and of the contribution it has already made to the welfare of these nations".³⁴ The Panama Congress helped Protestant missionaries to understand that their work was worthwhile, and that their efforts were no longer neglected. Furthermore the fact that John R. Mott had played an important role in Panama indicated that the Ecumenical movement which had been born with the Edinburgh Conference was now being reconciled to the Protestant mission work in Latin America.

The most complete evaluation of the impact of the Panama Congress was made at the Montevideo Congress in 1925. In considering the progress of Protestant work in the past decade, the CCLA leaders argued that the Panama Congress had enlarged the understanding of the opportunity that Latin America represented for the North American Protestant churches. This included a new appreciation of social work as an important aspect of missionary work. Though some measure of social work can be seen before 1916, it is clear that the CCLA created a greater awareness of its importance. One report noted that "many new hospitals, nursing agencies, and social centres have been established".³⁵ The same source highlighted the new interest that Protestant agencies had developed in literature, as demonstrated in the

publication of the magazine La Nueva Democracia, which became the official organ of the CCLA. The importance of this organ will be considered in the fifth chapter. However the impact of the Panama Congress can be seen most dramatically in the following three areas: (1) the awakening of the North American constituency to the need of promoting Protestant work in Latin America; (2) the cooperation between Protestant bodies, and (3) the institutional development of Protestantism in the region.

With regard to the first one of the expectations one of the aims for many of the Protestant missionaries working in Latin America was to mobilise the support of their constituencies in the United States. Paul Burgess of the Presbyterian Mission in Guatemala was one of those who hoped for this to happen:

There is no doubt that the Congress will awaken the North American churches a great deal to wish to do efficient work in Latin America. The needs of Latin American countries will be considered as never before, and the infant church of South and Central America will do good in joining their interests, efforts, and prayers with those churches willing to contribute to the fulfilling of their ideals.³⁶

The report that the Missionary Review of the World gave of the Congress two months after of its conclusion stressed the need for holding meetings in the United States. For this article the significance of the Congress from a North American point of view was to point out the failure of the Roman Catholic Church in these in Latin America. It was put thus:

It is greatly to be desired that a series of public meetings in the United States be arranged to disseminate the message and influence of the Congress among the home churches in the same way that the regional conferences in Latin America have extended the benefits of the Congress among the workers on the field. Is it not the time that mission study textbooks be prepared for all study classes on "What is Roman Catholicism? What are its peculiar teachings and practices? Few of the Christians in Protestant lands understand this Church and its practical influence in personal, social, and political affairs.³⁷

With hindsight, the organisers of the event recognised the Congress had helped them appeal to their fellow citizens: "It has led to a new interest at home in Christian work in Latin America. It has brought together in sympathy and trust and common purpose leaders of the evangelical Churches of North and South America".³⁸ The eager interest that North Americans manifested in Latin America illustrated this. The "Commission on Un-Occupied Fields" in the Montevideo Congress referred to the dissemination in the United States of knowledge on these countries as something "probably unparalleled in the whole history of the continent prior to 1916." They went on:

Tens of thousands of persons have been enroled in special classes studying the Latin republics from textbooks issued by the churches. More than a hundred important colleges and universities have established departments on Latin American subjects, other than in Spanish...The English speaking press, and especially the magazines, since 1916, have carried an increasing number of articles on all aspects of the Hispanic continent.³⁹

In this line of thinking the CCLA leaders were right when they argued that one of the most important services rendered by Panama

was to help the constituent members think of the whole of Latin America as a part historically, psychologically and spiritually of the Protestant mission field".⁴⁰

Secondly, the CCLA leaders stressed the cooperation among missionary agencies as another major achievement of the Congress. The Congress, they claimed, had provided an object lesson of love and fairness in the relationship between missions and churches, and it had led to a clearer discernment of the need of cooperation.⁴¹ The CCLA was convinced that no progress could be made by the Protestant missions in Latin America unless they were involved in a process of cooperation and unity. The territorial agreements among missions was depicted as a breakthrough. Before the CCLA's formation, only Puerto Rico, as far as the distribution of zones was concerned, had an agreement. Hence the distribution of areas of Mexico at the Cincinnati meeting in 1914, and the distribution of the whole region at Panama, appeared as a significant achievement of the CCLA. In Montevideo the "Commission on Cooperation and Unity" could say that since 1916 "the occupation of territory has been reached in practically every one of the twenty Latin American countries."⁴²

The claim of a new cooperative spirit could be exaggerated. Harlam P. Beach, for instance, had a romantic view of the harmony that characterised the event:

Bishops from North America locked arms with laymen, as they strolled about or sat together in the breeze-swept ballroom, where the sessions of the Congress were held.

While it was only the more demonstrative Latins who embraced each other, they and the staid, cold, New Englanders were as in their familiar intercourse between sessions. In other words, had there never been anything more than these ten days of Christian fellowship, with no suggestion of formal conference, the gathering would have justified fully its assembling. Dubious or aggressive Romanist onlookers must have felt inwardly impelled to testify of this group of leaders, "Behold how they love one another!" And so said the rank and file of the Panamanians. ⁴³

Finally the institutional development of Protestant missions was another example of how Protestant work in Latin America had progressed. The CCLA had committed itself to raising money to build or improve Protestant buildings for educational, social and medical purposes. Judging by what was reported in Montevideo in 1925, Protestantism, seen through its institutions, schools, hospitals, and other services, had emerged as a powerful influence in Latin America:

Institutions developed under the auspices of the General and Regional Committees: (1) union theological seminaries in Mexico, Puerto Rico, Chile, Argentina and Brazil. (2) union papers and bookstores in Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba and Chile; (3) Union literature work in Brazil and Santo Domingo (4) union college and women's training school in Argentina; (5) federated educational work in Brazil. Chile, Cuba and Puerto Rico; (6) Union hospitals in Mexico, Santo Domingo and Brazil (7) Annual interdenominational conferences in Cuba, Puerto Rico and Chile and educational conferences in Brazil, Cuba, River Plate and Mexico (8) a union Board in Santo Domingo.⁴⁴

3.4. Theological emphasis of speeches at the Panama Congress

We will describe here the main points of the thirty addresses which were delivered during the ten days of the Panama Congress.

These discourses give a picture of the religious ideas that the leaders of the North American missionary societies wanted to promote in Latin America. We will then seek to determine the main concern of that first generation of Latin American Protestants represented there.

3.4.1. Reassuring the delegates

We need not be surprised that Robert Speer gave the keynote speech of the Congress. He had arrived in Panama not only as the driving force behind the preparations for the Congress, but also as the experienced Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

His lecture, "Our attitude and Spirit", set the tone of the whole Congress. Knowing the troubles and fears that had surrounded the organization of the event, Speer reassured the delegates that what they were witnessing was both God's will and, at the same time, the search for God's will. "Why should we have any misgivings or fears?" he asked. "Nothing wrong can befall us". He was sure that they were bringing, as a Filipino teacher once said to a North American deputation who went to see the Protestant work there: "some sweet word from God": "And I imagine there are many of us who would not have thought it worth while to come down to this Congress in Panama, if we had not been assured that in this place, from that dear Lord, we should hear some, at least, of His sweet words".⁴⁵

Speer was conscious that the Congress itself represented a break

with the past efforts of Protestant work in Latin America. Hence he spoke of facing the work with "new standards and more exacting principles".⁴⁶ The aim of the congress was defined in this address as the "desire to do the will of God and the longing to see "the Kingdom of God to come in all the American nations".⁴⁷

Another attitude was the search for unity, to be achieved along with respect for the diversity of "different minds, "variant experiences" "different nations and races".⁴⁸ In approaching the theme of unity the speakers could not avoid criticising denominational tensions. This is why Speer maintained the Congress should project into Latin America a missionary enterprise centred on the message of Jesus "with everything eliminated from it that could not abide in Him".⁴⁹ In this regard Speer believed that the Congress was a unique experience. He based this impression on comments of delegates like: "I never had gone to any gathering anywhere with the same experience of heart, with the same feeling of brotherly love, with the same confidence of unity of mind, and of result which God has given in connection with this gathering here in Panama".⁵⁰ The third attitude that Speer encouraged was one of asking what Jesus would do in facing the problems of Latin American countries.⁵¹ In doing this he marked out four great characteristics of Jesus: Discernment, love and compassion, absolute unselfishness and, patience. Further, he noted the energy and expectation present in the ministry of Jesus as virtues present in the Congress which will begin "a new era for all the nations of North and

South America".⁵²

In line with Speer's opening address, Bishop William Oldham interpreted the event as a timely and momentous experience that would affect not only the life of Latin American societies, but also of Protestantism itself in these countries. At the time, Oldham was the secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The title of his address was "How to preserve a realizing sense of Jesus".

Latin America could not continue waiting for a stronger presence of Christianity. This was the right time, said Oldham. The experience of the Apostles described in the second chapter of Acts was going to be repeated in Latin America:

How profoundly we were moved when brother Pond of Venezuela told us of the long years of toil and of the seeming scantiness of results! How it impressed us when brother Ewing declared that one could count on the fingers of his two hands the outstanding men of evangelical faith in any of those great republics! When we recall the fact that probably, counting with the utmost generosity, less than one-half of the many millions of people scattered throughout this Latin world are thinking in any degree the thoughts of Jesus as they were recorded in the Bible, or are comprehending life and light through his pathway! ⁵³

A welcome given by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama, Dr. Ernest Lefevre, opened the evening sederunt. Though the speaker made it clear that he was a "sincere and devout Catholic", he reflected the ideals of the organisers of the Panama Congress. He saw the importance of the event in the wake of World

War I. First, he confirmed what the organisers of Panama had often said; while Christian countries in Europe were at war, on the American continent the people's interest was in peace: "You have chosen the most propitious moment for your noble task. While I am speaking, violence and fury are unchained in the Old World, destroying everything which they meet in their pathway. This horrible calamity fill us with terror". Secondly, he reiterated the predominant mood of the Congress, namely the closeness of the two Americas. In his view both Americas, moved by Christian principles, were compelled to work to bring the War to an end.

It is only natural that, guided by the ideals of righteousness preached by Jesus our Lord, we, the peoples of America, should do all in our power not only to keep away from strife, but also to bring about a lasting peace among those who are at war. We must show, too, that in our American republics, in spite of their faults and deficiencies, pacific ideals flourish better than in monarchical countries. This is due to the efforts they make for the development of civic and moral education.⁵⁴

Third and finally, Lefevre understood well the objective of the Congress as seen by some non-Protestant circles in Latin America, that is to say, as instrumental in unifying Protestant and Roman Catholic forces: "Your purpose is to unify the moral and religious forces of America".⁵⁵

John R. Mott spoke in his capacity of General Secretary of the International Committee of YMCA and Chairman of the Continuation Committee of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference. As we have noted in the section on "John R. Mott and Latin America" what he did

in his speech praised the event as a turning point not only for the future of Christianity in Latin America, but also in the light of what happened in the Edinburgh Conference of 1910. The Panama Congress had no reason to envy that of Edinburgh, for it too had a great future ahead of it:

I persist in saying great hopes. The world has the right to expect something truly great of this Panama Congress. The world has a right to expect that there shall issue from our coming together here a larger plan for a helpfulness for all the nations of this hemisphere, both Latin and Anglo Saxon.⁵⁶

3.4.2. Power of prayer

The address given by Archibald McLean, the President of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society of the Disciples of Christ, also added to the great expectations about the Congress and of God's action among them. In his speech on "The Ministry of Intercession" he reviewed the Biblical references about the power of prayer. The revival that they were awaiting in Latin America could not be a reality unless they were ready to pray. All revivals in the history of Christianity had been "preceded by much earnest prayer".⁵⁷ He quoted, as a contemporary example, the success of Mott's conferences in Asia between 1912 and 1914.⁵⁸ McLean was a clear example of the spirituality and Evangelical passion of the organisers of the Panama Congress, despite the fact that they were frequently criticised for their theological liberalism.

William Adams, of the Union Theological Seminary, in his

"Lessons from the early Christians" highlighted the things to be learned from the past. First, no barrier can separate those whom Christ has made one. Second, God's method for the overcoming of barriers is the sharing of experience., and third, the experience which God would have us share is the enlargement and the enrichment of the life which follows the surrender of the will Jesus Christ.⁵⁹

He assured delegates that the diversity of the delegations at the Congress was not in itself a problem impossible to overcome. The early history of the Christian church had shown that Christianity could break all sorts of barriers whether they were of language, race, or customs.

We have been hearing about them during this Congress We have heard of the difficulty with which the Anglo-Saxon finds his way to the heart of the Latin, We have heard of the need of a native ministry that can preach to each people the word of God in its own tongue. No one can deny that the need is real and that the difficulty is great, and yet we need to remind ourselves that this difficulty is not insuperable. God has made us for one another, and the man who has found in Jesus Christ the revelation of his own best self, will, in time, find his way to the heart of the brother for whom, like himself, Christ is God.⁶⁰

Saint Paul had to face most of the challenges that were worrying them in Panama. The challenge that the educated classes posed to Protestantism in Latin America was similar to that faced by Paul in Corinth. In this realm the message that should be put across was just Jesus Christ in its practical implications, for "he knew that what converts men is not logic, but life." This was the only way to confront the scepticism of the educated classes in Latin America.⁶¹ The religious

message that Protestantism must bring to Latin America was one able to affirm life in contrast to a religion of prohibition and of restriction".⁶²

Walter R. Lambuth, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in his speech "The Secret of the Mighty Work of God", drew attention to the need for the power of God on account of the Latin American problems: "Our task requires a Great God".⁶³ Faith in and passion for God were fundamental for repeating the success of first century evangelization in Latin America.⁶⁴ He also emphasized that the religion to be spread in Latin America had to be grounded in life and not in dogmas: "Instead of an elaborate manual of instructions, this was the simple and stirring commission which he put into the hands of his missionaries: believe, hope, love, pray, burn, waken the dead!"⁶⁵

3.4.3. Social pragmatism

Henry Churchill, President of Oberlin College, addressed the theme of practical Christianity in his lecture on "Reality and Religion". Reality and spirituality, were two sides of the same thing. Like or different were the words used to describe the intertwined nature of reality and spirituality. The Christian message must be like in that it referred to things that belong to the world. Yet God was beyond the natural order. Hence the message must be different in order to show that Christianity had a distinctive contribution to make to life. Yet neither can be spared.⁶⁶

Alongside the social dimension of the Christian message there

was interest in addressing the challenge that modern science posed to Christianity. Francis J. McConnell, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, and Henry Churchill King, were the only speakers who directly dealt with this subject. Both argued that there was no reason to see Christianity and Science as antagonistic forces. Christian theology had come to terms with the fact that traditional Christianity had much to learn from modern ideas on religion, while science had moved from the mechanistic approach of Darwin and Spencer. In short they thought that Christianity and Science had both discarded much of their philosophical and dogmatic baggage. McConnell, in his lecture "Faith in an Age of Doubt" saw the material progress of humanity as an example that science and Christianity were working hand in hand. He emphasized that their interaction in the building of the Suez and the Panama Canals, as well as the contribution of the science to controlling diseases and consequently in the betterment of humanity.⁶⁷ King was more zealous in his positive approach towards Science. His lecture was "The Contribution of Modern Science to the Ideal Interests." He presented five points which show that science was an ally instead of an enemy of Christianity. (1) Science had increased the resources of power and wealth, making with it man's secure and enjoyable. (2) Science was challenging humanity to master increased material resources. King believed that the World War I had demonstrated that men did not know how best to use material technology. Christianity therefore had a great opportunity to

"send out into the world men and women with such discernment of the laws of life as will make possible the right use of these resources".(3) As modern science showed a far larger view of the world, Christianity felt compelled to reinterpret its views on God.(4) The analysis of religion that the Panama Congress was seeking was based on the scientific method. There was, in Panama, an effort "to get the facts". (5) Science had helped Christianity to see in the scientific spirit, to see straight, to report exactly, and to give an absolutely honest reaction on the situation in which one is placed." He went on "I do not know any closer historical parallel to that scientific spirit than Jesus's own constant insistence upon utter inner integrity. "Why even of yourselves," He says, "judge ye not that which is right?"...⁶⁸

3.4.4 The role of the Bible

Two addresses stressed the importance of the Bible in Protestant missionary work. The speakers were another John Fox, Secretary of the American Bible Society, and A.R. Stark of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Fox spoke on "The Care and Custody of the Scriptures." His main emphasis was the responsibility of Churches and missions for the work of publication and distribution of the Bible. The essence of the Reformation in Europe in the sixteenth century should be repeated in Latin America, in the sense that it "opened a way of getting back to the Bible, of coming to a renewed and more efficient understanding of its contents, and of making the Scriptures available for everybody."⁶⁹ He claimed that the Bible had not had much influence

in Latin America, unlike in Anglo-Saxon countries.

The influence of the Bible upon a national literature and the reflex value of the literature in extending its influence and preserving its power would be themes of absorbing interest. Both English and German literature owe much to the Bible. Its very critics couch their criticism oftentimes in pungent Biblical phrases. Would to God the day was at hand when Latin America and Spain itself will see the supreme value of the Bible! Spanish literature has not been Biblicized as English or German or even French has been....I do not wish to disparage the existing translations into Spanish. The versions of Reina and Valera and others, not omitting our Mr. Pratt, are entitled to an honourable place in Spanish literature.⁷⁰

Any cooperation between Protestant organizations and the Roman Catholic Church towards the translation and distribution of the Bible in Latin America was perceived by Fox as something to be "heartily recommended".⁷¹ He also assured delegates that the denominational divisions were not at risk in such cooperation in translation work. Indeed, he used the occasion to say that he did not see any wrong in the denominational divisions which were under fire in the Congress: "There is nothing necessarily wrong in the existence of Christian Churches in separate organizations. The Bible Societies demonstrate the fact that without breaking down every wall of partition between denominations, it is possible for them to cooperate harmoniously and effectively in the translation, publication, and circulation of the scriptures".⁷² Stark provided information on the struggle that people in Latin America had to face in order to get access to the Bible. In his speech, "The Place and Power of the Bible in the Individual and Nation" he told of the persecution and opposition of

the Roman Catholic Church against the agents of his society. Yet the circulation of the Bible was going on, and the Congress itself was a testimony of the power of the Bible in Latin America.⁷³

3.4.5. The question of Women

The role of women in Latin America was another subject which was given some attention at the Panama Congress. Three speakers dealt with this theme: Mrs. G. Howland, missionary in Chihuahua, Mexico, spoke on "The Approach to Latin American Women in the Home"; Lucien Lee Kinsolving, the Episcopal missionary bishop of Southern Brazil, on "The Women of Brazil"; and finally Florence Smith, a missionary working in Valparaiso, Chile on "Problems of Latin American Woman-hood in the Home".

Mrs Howland was concerned largely about the best way to reach women. She concluded that friendship was the way. She believed that Protestant hospitals, clinics and schools provided the means to get into touch with pupils's parents and patients' relatives. For her, the importance of reaching the women rested on the "unique" position that Latin American women enjoy in their homes, and the power that they exercised over religious observances in the family:

The young lawyer, fresh from the university or from foreign travel across the seas, returns to do quietly the bidding of his mother. The diplomat and the statesman will often make an intellectual or religious sacrifice to spare the feelings of his mother, the nature of which can hardly be comprehended by our American children who glory in the expression of their dominant personality. The failure of bringing forward the educated middle-aged men of our time to a position of positive acceptance of Christ and an open alignment in

evangelical ranks may, in many cases, be directly traced to this source. "While my mother lives I can make no change" is the excuse of many an intellectually convinced man who is urged to take an open stand.⁷⁴

Bishop Kinsolving also stressed the influence of women in Latin American societies. Puzzled by how these uneducated persons could have such a hold over the whole family, he concluded that their influence defied analysis. However "uneducated", "unathletic", and ignorant, they had power over their intellectual husbands. In his view in Anglo-saxon countries, even when placed on a pedestal, a wife took a supportive position alongside her husband. But "in Brazil there is that subtle influence of another kind, an influence that makes itself felt.... for good". For Kinsolving the success of Protestantism rested on reaching the women in Latin America:

I believe, if you touch the women of Brazil, if you get the hearts of the women touched with the glorious gospel, if you get them to rise and stand free with that liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, you will have taken a long step towards the evangelization of the colossal republic to the south.⁷⁵

Florence Smith deliver a longer speech on the subject. She saw as curious the importance that Latin American people gave to the Virgin Mary-- a woman. They adored and exalted her even to deification, but gave little homage or chivalry toward womanhood. She believed that this was matched by a "latent and subtle degradation of wifehood and motherhood in the teachings of the dominant church".⁷⁶ However she asserted that the "naturally quick intellects and sound common sense" found in Latin American women, though

often stunted by too early maternity, contrasted well with people in the United States where the "intellect was dulled by an early acquaintance with vice". But these Latin American "intellects have long lain dormant; disuse and lack of training have led to widespread mental apathy", and furthermore they have been "subjected to deadening influences":

The influence of a religious worship which they could not understand, the lack of educational stimulus even in the highest social circles, the restrictions of a life filled with petty interests, have all contributed to make the Latin American woman of independent thought and action comparatively rare even at the present time. Even in evangelical circles, we have not yet known how to dissipate this mental inertia.⁷⁷

She highlighted three main problems related to the women in Latin America. First. The first was the problem of motherhood. Mothers in Latin America loved their children, but not wisely: "There are comparatively few wise mothers to be found in any class.... There is a great love of children but almost no wise training of the child". The reason for this was "the entire lack of preparation for motherhood, and ignorance of the most rudimentary facts concerning the care and nourishment of children".⁷⁸ Second, there was the problem of home-keeping. Here the problem of the women in Latin America was that they "loathe work". Women of these countries were not interested in what had revolutionised Anglo-Saxons homes: expenditure of time, the relation of income to expenditure, the balanced diet, the hygiene and sanitation of the home. Third. The third was the problem of civic betterment. In Latin America women were not interested in getting

involved in movements to transform social conditions of their people.

3.4.6. Jesus: The Centre

The person of Christ was the theological topic that was most addressed in the Panama Congress. Five lectures were devoted to it. The first was by George Alexander, pastor of the Presbyterian Church on University Place, in New York. His talk was entitled "Jesus Christ, The Same Yesterday, To-Day and Forever." In an epoch in which religion was under fire and in which the word "change" had become the watchword in virtually all spheres, Alexander wished to stress the unchanging nature the relevance of the person of Jesus. Blindness and deafness were the adjectives most suitable to describe those who thought that the revelation of Jesus Christ was outworn, and that Jesus was historically too vague to command homage: "If they have heard not, they hear nothing; if they see not in him the way to the Father, then they stumble benighted and find not the way".⁷⁹ Jesus Christ was still the answer and remedy for the world's ills: "Education and enlightenment, ethical culture and civilization have proved utterly inadequate to exorcise the demons that lurk in the heart of men...Jesus Christ is the Saviour, and the only Saviour".⁸⁰

World War I was showing the inability of the world to bring peace to humanity, but the speaker saw the person of Jesus in his old character becoming more and more relevant. Furthermore a new age was emerging in which Christian values were the essential motive of life:

Out of the world-tragedy which is now being enacted one thing is sure: the old order in which we have had our training and our experience hitherto has gone, gone forever, and what new order is to emerge no man can forecast. We are going forth into a new age to meet new perils and bear new burdens, to be confronted with new perplexities. What we need is the assurance that the word of the Master, the changeless Master, is still good....⁸¹

This unchanging Jesus, who had conquered the pagans in early Christian history, was still the mighty force that would redeem Latin America.

The lecture by Arthur S. Lloyd, President of the Board of Missions of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A, was entitled "The Preeminence of Christ". He highlighted the term "life" instead of "dogma" to describe the person of Christ. Lloyd thought that when John said that in Jesus "was life and the life was the light of men" he was not conscious that he was talking about theological dogmas but rather "of the changes that had been wrought in himself by contact with his Master".⁸² Nor had James not discovered this truth "by means of theological discussion".⁸³

Charles T. Paul, President of the College of Missions, Indianapolis, Indiana, spoke on the "The principles and Spirit of Jesus Essential to meet the social needs of our time." He also took advantage of World War I to accentuate the significance of the message of Jesus Christ. The War had shown that there were still "clouds of darkness in the loftiest centers of civilization", and that Christianity had not been

"adequately applied to national and international affairs".⁸⁴

In describing the bearing of Christianity on the social problems of Latin America, he highlighted four points of Jesus' teaching. The first was the principle of individual worth. While Jesus extolled the importance of the human being, modern society, with its emphasis on democracy, was melting it away. He believed that materialism and commercialism had "bred an alarming callousness toward human life".⁸⁵ The second principle was that of cooperative solidarity. Though for Jesus the worth of the individual is infinitely priceless, the individual has neither a separate nor a solitary value. Its meaning has to be found not in isolation but in social relations.⁸⁶ The third principle was the affirmation of the spiritual. The spiritual has to do, according to the speaker, with the "quality of life" and this cannot be given by the world. In this regard the betterment of society was determined by the action of better men: "Inner improvement is the indispensable accompaniment of any external moral and social advance".⁸⁷ The fourth principle was Jesus' optimism and faith in men: Jesus "believed in people. Amid all the debasement and depravities of society he saw capacities for good. Though misunderstood and opposed by his own generation, he never doubted that his kingdom would be established".⁸⁸ The author saw the importance of this principle for Latin America, because of the pessimism that characterised the works of their writers:

It is a conservative statement to say that the pages of most

brilliant of contemporary Latin American authors, with few exceptions, bear in a conspicuous degree the blight of pessimism, There is the frankest avowal of the loss of social hope, of depreciation of the value of human life, of the worthlessness of all struggle or effort for improvement. And the concomitant of such avowal is usually a loss of belief in God and the soul.⁸⁹

3.4.7. God and Unity

Paul de Schweitnitz, Vice President of the Moravian Church in America, entitled his lecture "Christ's vision of the Unity of all believers." His aim was to expound the importance of unity in Jesus's teaching. He based his ideas on the passage: "I lay down my life for the sheep...Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; they also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and they shall become one flock and one shepherd".⁹⁰ His main claim was that when Jesus spoke these words he was not thinking of the doctrinal discussion that would later splinter Protestantism:

Do you really imagine when our Lord spoke these words about the one flock and about His earnest desire that all His followers should be one that He could have been thinking of Baptists and Methodists and Presbyterians and Congregationalists, of Romans, Anglicans and Protestants? Can he have been thinking even of Lutheranism, or Calvinism around "filioque" and anticipating the great division between the Latin and the Greek Churches?.... There was but one faith, the one faith in Him who was about to lay down His life for the sheep.⁹¹

Unity as Jesus understood it was far from discussions on faith and order or polity and administration. The unity of all believers that Jesus wanted involved the "the overcoming of the fundamental differences of social status, class, sex and race".⁹²

The theme of God was addressed in the speech "The Recovery of the Apostolic Conception of God" given by Lemuel Call Barnes, Secretary of the American Baptist Home Mission. For Barnes the apostolic conception of God mean at least two things: First, that Jesus was both God and man; and secondly "that the unity of God and man is a vital unity, a central, and not a formal, outward, mechanical unity".⁹³ This said, the author moves to one of the sticking points of the Congress, namely, the fear among some that the proposed organic unity would does destroy separate denominational identities. As a Baptist the speaker emphasized with this, fear and he therefore suggested a type of unity that would permit diversity:

Our great danger is that we may conceive unity in mechanical terms instead of in terms of personality, in terms of spirit. Pan-Americanism is a favored idea, yet it does not mean that all of these twenty-one republics shall become one in outward organism, but only that they shall become one in inward spirit and purpose. The ideal is cooperation, not consolidation. That is the unity that we are to seek in church as well as in state. That unity is not on the circumference, in any outward formularies either mental or ecclesiastical, but unity at the very center; identity at the pivotal point. It is unity between us and God, and therefore inevitably between us and one another.⁹⁴

3.4.8. Triumph of Christianity

The progress of Christianity in the world was certainly not overlooked at the Panama Congress. Three speeches dealt with this subject: John F Goucher, of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, spoke on "The Triumph of Christianity". and James I Vance, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in

Nashville, Tennessee, spoke on "The Vitality and Conquering Power of Christianity -How realized and maintained." Alvaro Reis from Brazil gave a lecture with the same title as that of Vance, but his lecture will be dealt with later, in the section dealing with Latin American contributions.

In Goucher's lecture the power of Christianity was closely related to the Kingdom of God. Though the Kingdom has not come completely, it is partially acting to transform society".⁹⁵ The triumph of Christianity was a fact because God had promised it: It must triumph, otherwise His love faileth, for God has made the triumph of Christianity the object of His follower's daily prayer".⁹⁶ Paradoxically he saw the outbreak of the War as evidence of the triumph rather than the failure of Christianity.⁹⁷ The War had demonstrated the weaknesses of "national devotion", and would lead to an internationalism based on loyalty to God. The breaking down of national barriers would be accompanied by a breaking down of denominational loyalties within Protestantism:

The missionary no longer rates himself to be an exclusive agent of the particular board which selected him, sent him to the foreign field, and maintains him. He has a fuller vision, and considers himself a citizen of the Kingdom of God, and his board and his denomination to be under a like commission...Formerly he too often laboured to extend and increase the work of his particular society, by unconsciously or perhaps consciously at times engaging in predatory campaigns upon the work and converts of other societies, by unnecessary duplication, by harmful competition, or by other aggressive methods which dissipated effort, wasted resources, misinterpreted the spirit of Christ, and by gathering not with Him, registered himself against Him.⁹⁸

The author saw the increased momentum of Panamericanism since 1916 as part of an international mood in which the expansion of Protestantism should be seen as a duty.

The anti-expansionist may have logical reasons for withholding himself from any great campaign, but as long as the charters rests upon, "Go ye into all the world," the anti-expansionist has no raison d'etre Our duty is co-extensive with our goal. The barriers that once seemed to check us are now removed. The Texan Rio Grande, once our Rubicon, has been crossed. We recognize it as such no longer. Let us rather not stop until we reach Terra del Fuego...Let us go on giving them the message which shall, as told here, cause echoes to encircle the earth which shall b
lend in one deep chorus and all the people by yonder Southern Sea shall know the truth, and it shall make them free.⁹⁹

Furthermore he believed that the War had also shaken "the claims of the Roman Catholic Church to spiritual authority, infallibility, and temporal power".¹⁰⁰

Vance's lecture emphasized the signs that pointed towards the success of Christianity: its vitality, its expression in personality, its conquering power. An example of its vitality was the social political influence that it have had in Japan, China, Korea and Mexico.¹⁰¹ This resided in the fact that it was rooted in a dogma, nor in an institution, but in personality. Its conquering power was seen in the expansion of Christianity in the last century.¹⁰²

We will explore in chapter VII the importance that the CCLA gave to the new era of relations between the United States and Latin America. Suffice it to say that several of the ^{speeches} at Panama

made room for this subject. William Cabell, Methodist Bishop of Virginia, dealt with it in a speech called "The Common ideals of the Latin Americans and the Anglo Saxons", pointing out that the first common ideal of both sections of America is the ideal of freedom:

As I think of ideals that are common to us both, at once there comes into my mind that deep, unquenchable love of freedom, that yearning for liberty, that deep seated conviction that every individual has the unquestioned right to the fullest and freest expression of his life.¹⁰³

Finally Homer C Stuntz, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in South America spoke on "The Price of Leadership". He pointed out five things. First, was the price of death to self: "death to self is only the insulation demanded for all human wires which would carry the current of God's power to a dying world".¹⁰⁴

The second was the price of securing an adequate motive. He saw that Pity and denominational loyalty were not enough to be a leader in Latin America: "they are to be rejected as shallow and weak". The motive had to be other in a region which causes depression and dismay, for it was dominated by a medieval politic-ecclesiasticism, inhabited by a people without the word of God, honeycombed by atheism. So the only motive was the love of Christ.¹⁰⁵ Third was the price of mastering his material and his tools. In this Stunts was referring to the efforts of missionaries to know the terrain to which they were being sent: understanding the peculiarities of race, the history of the country, and the diversity of tendencies.¹⁰⁶ Fourthly

there was the price of divinely given patience. The enterprise in Latin America had made them understand that the true leaders there would only appear in the second or third generation of converts.¹⁰⁷ Fifth was price of the endowment of power promised to all God's servants, or in other words the certainty that God and not human machinery would make their work a success.¹⁰⁸

5. Latin American Speakers at the Congress

In this section we will review the thought of the Latin American speakers in the Panama Conference as it was expressed in the devotional and evening addresses.

Erasmio Braga was the type of Latin American Protestant who fitted in well with the objectives of the CCLA. He was a well educated man who believed that Protestantism in Latin America should be re-launched in a more modern fashion. His speech, "The claims of Christ on thinking men" pointed out three principles which were central in the CCLA programme: the new relationship between the United States and Latin America, the search for philosophical and religious trust of educated classes and the supremacy of Christianity.

He acknowledged the increasingly close relationship between North America and South America, and observed that in facing their problems, Latin Americans were "turning more and more to North America for sympathy and leadership".¹⁰⁹ In tune with a Congress which emphasized reaching the educated and middle

classes, Braga was sure that those sections of society were looking for spiritual as well as for material help from the North: "the intellectual classes are looking outward, and they are in an attitude now to receive this message from the brethren of the North if these will only come and show them how Jesus Christ faced the problems of life".¹¹⁰ Finally he put religious truth above any other search for truth. The deep sense of truth and the aspiration to know it rested in Jesus Christ and His righteousness would be found in living and facing the problems of life.¹¹¹

Eduardo Monteverde was named as the President of the event. At the time he worked as a professor at the University of Montevideo in Uruguay. Monteverde, like Braga, also saw signs of a new relationship between North and South. Monteverde and Braga, like most Protestant intellectuals, had distance themselves from the Latin American mood that feared any closeness with the United States because of its expansionist spirit. Monteverde's view was based on the Pan-American initiatives which representatives of the economic interests of both sides of the continent were promoting. For example, the Scientific Congress held before the Panama Congress, called by the Panamerican Union, had in his view "demonstrated the possibility of cooperation between the men of North, Central and South America; it had brought into clearer knowledge the respective characteristics of these nations".¹¹² Furthermore Monteverde's speech highlighted the new views

emerging in North America: "South America is no longer the synonym of anarchy, barbarism and backwardness". "But it is necessary" he continued,

that this new understanding of Latin America shall be extended through all parts of that great republic which is our friend, which should be our inspiration, which would be for us the best of all models, and which could afford to us such great assistance.¹¹³

Anita Monteverde also addressed the Congress in a brief talk entitled "Social Work for the Women of Uruguay". She praised the work on temperance that YMCA was carrying out and indicated that Uruguay, like other countries in Latin America, was open to the influence of Protestantism.¹¹⁴

Alvaro Reis, Presbyterian pastor in Rio Janeiro, Brazil, and Emilio del Toro of Puerto Rico were two other Latin Americans invited to address the Panama Congress. Reis spoke on "The Vital and Conquering Power of Christianity--How realized and maintained." Toro had formerly been Roman Catholic, and at Panama he focused on what he called "The beneficent influence of Christian principles". The ideas of Reis can be organised into the following points:

- (1) Christianity seeks the transformation of the sinner and not his destruction.
- (2) The family, as the first cell of social organism, is transformed when Christianity saves and regenerates one of its members.
- (3) Christianity not only affects individual life but social reality as

well. It is against political tyranny and introduces social conceptions from the Gospel, including the ideas liberty, equality, and fraternity. Christianity is inspired by such theological principals such as the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.¹¹⁵

(4) Finally, the conquering characteristics of Christianity would be seen in Latin America as an outcome of the Panama Congress, marking a difference with past Protestant work in the region:

The march of evangelical Christianity in Latin America has seemed slow. But I have the faith that shortly - and the sooner because of this Congress - we shall reap a Pentecostal harvest from the careful cultivation of the past fifty years, which will attest that Christianity is the same, yesterday, to-day and forever. Verily, the harvest is already whitening, with the promise of an abundant yield.¹¹⁶

Toro, an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Puerto

Rico, lectured on "The principles and Spirit of Jesus: essential to meet the social needs of our times". In the context of the message that the CCLA wanted to promote in Latin America, the importance of Toro's speech was manifold. First Toro was former Roman Catholic who believed that Protestantism must be given a chance in Latin America. Second, he came from a country that had recently become a North American protectorate. Accepting the argument of Protestant missionaries that the Roman Catholic Church had proved inherently unable to contribute to the political development of Latin America, he implied that Protestantism was what Latin America needed. Indeed he believed that progress of the United States was rooted in the social influence of Protestantism, which had predominated in that country

since the arrivals of the Puritans. Puerto Rico was now experiencing this social Protestantism under the control of the United States. He also argued in what we have seen as a central element of Protestant discourse at that time, that the religious competition of Protestantism would eventually help the Roman Catholic Church:

Until a few years ago the Catholic Church was, in my native island, Puerto Rico, the state religion. Among the public expenditures those for worship were conspicuous. The influence of the clergy extended everywhere. And what was the result after four centuries of abundant opportunities? A people for most part indifferent or unbelieving. There took place a change of regime. The Church was separated from the State. A struggle began. Under the protection of free institutions of North America established in the island, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, Baptists, Episcopalians, began their work. Faint-hearted Catholic priests accustomed to the enjoyment of special privileges decried the ruin of their church. But it was not so. The spirit of the North entered into her and men accustomed to a life of freedom gave her a new impetus. And to-day, separated from the state, sustained by herself, she is realizing a nobler and more Christian mission than in the times when [her] power was absolute.¹¹⁷

The last Latin American speaker at Panama was Eduardo Carlos Pereira, a Brazilian pastor of a Presbyterian Independent Church, in Sao Paulo. The title of his discourse was "True leadership: the fundamental need". His approach reflected the tension in the relationship between national workers and foreign Protestant missionaries. He had been enroled in a long struggle with missionaries who wanted to permanent control over the destiny of Protestant churches. In his view there were two fundamental i were problems in the preparation of leaders: the obstacles that Latin American culture posed, and the hindrance of

missionary structures. With regard to the first he pointed out the following three things: (1) The moral and social instability of the Latin American democracies resulted from racial conflict. (2) The absence of noble ideals of the welfare of mankind; the search for pleasure and material benefits. (3) The absence of an adequate system of education.¹¹⁸

So far neither the Roman Catholic Church nor Protestant Churches had the ability to prepare the leaders that Latin American countries needed. The Roman Catholic Church had failed because it was in essence absolutist; and Protestantism because it was not Biblical enough. He pinpointed a major defect of Protestantism in the sectarianism that was conspicuous in the denominational divisions.

For him a Protestantism divided was alien to Latin culture:

Little or no help, however, can be given to South American progress by a Protestantism divided, intolerant, weak and torn by the spirit of sectarianism- a perpetual stumbling stone to the Latin peoples. The Saxon race -- individualistic, strong, and self-efficient in its exclusivism -- may be able to accommodate itself to the individualism of its historic and religious organization -- even when this organization is divided into sectarian groups - but the Latin race -- social, genial, with its collective tendencies -- will, with difficulty, adapt itself to this sectarian individualism.¹¹⁹

Besides this he believed efforts of the Protestant missionaries to perpetuate their power a great obstacle to the promotion of national leaders. This "regime of missionary parasitism" as he called it, was causing problems:

There is, however, generally speaking, a painful silence in the various denominations. The result of this is that a regime of missionary parasitism is being perpetuated. In the absence of true leaders, the would-be incompetent leaders appear to

hinder the work. Energies are dissipated; consciences are weakened; divisions and sects are multiplied; anarchy and discontent prevail; pessimism and discouragement and death threaten us.¹²⁰

Pereira believed that Protestant missionaries not only were unable to prepare a native leadership, but that many actually resisted attempts towards it:

The man who leads any movement for autonomy, emancipation, and independence will be suspected at once of being a self-seeker, arrogant, the enemy of missionaries, ungrateful, nativist. When the leader is so represented by his countrymen, the missionaries naturally will be inclined to believe that it is a pathological case of nationalism, more especially so, as this is an epidemic of the time...¹²¹

Pereira's ideas reflected the indigenous Protestantism that the CCLA wanted to foster in Latin America. In this speech the CCLA could show that there was real interest in a new and more native Protestantism in these countries. Yet, in the event, the CCLA achieved little in this regard. Protestant missionaries developed such a resistance only political revolutions convinced them to relinquish power. Even today, seventy years after the Panama Congress, Protestant churches in Latin America are still struggling with missionaries who believe that the nationals cannot be more than their subordinates.

6. Opposition to the Panama Congress

The leaders of the Panama Congress were well aware of the tensions and risks involved in this enterprise. They knew that they were under fire from many critics. There was much at stake in the

holding of the Congress. Various groups representing different points, argued that the Panama Congress could turn out to be a liability rather than an asset to Latin America. CCLA leaders showed their awareness of this in the lengthy document "The Inception and History of the Congress" in which the origin of the event was analyzed. The document named four groups that either opposed or had grave doubts about the validity of the event. First, the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America not surprisingly looked on it as a threat to her religious authority in the region. Second were those North American politicians and businessmen sections who, at that time, were taking advantage of a new process of rapprochement between Latin America and the United States. Third there were some people in North America who believed that the CCLA leaders were seeking a compromise with the Roman Catholic Church. Fourth, there were the North American Protestant missionaries and Latin Americans members of Protestant churches who believed that there was no intention of assuming a strong position against the Roman Catholic Church. At the Congress this opposition was described as follows:

The closing weeks of 1915 were a time of solicitude. Aside from the pressure of the tasks involved in the adequate preparation for a representative gathering at Panama, a series of special problems demanded solution. Marked opposition expressed by local ecclesiastical authorities at Panama to the holding of the Congress caused much pressure to be brought upon the Committee on Arrangements to reconsider the question of the place of meeting. Not a few important leaders in political, educational and commercial relations with Latin America expressed the fear that the Congress, by injecting elements of religious strife, would harm Pan-American

relations, which were giving a promise of happy development. Some religious leaders of North America feared that the Congress would have the effect of postponing Christian unity in North America and the rest of the world by fostering an attitude of bitter hostility the Roman Catholic Church. Many sincere and deeply earnest missionaries in various Latin American fields desired the abandonment of the Congress on the opposite ground that it would represent, under ruling of the Committee on Arrangements mentioned above, a surrender to Roman Catholicism. ¹²²

7. Misgivings in Latin America

In Latin America the main doubts about the Panama Congress had to do with the approach of the CCLA leaders towards the Roman Catholic Church. In the year before the event, Protestants in Latin America, both missionaries and nationals, had expressed their concern that the CCLA did not adequately understand the limitations placed on their work by antagonism of the official church towards them. This explains the written protest against the "Declaration of Caldwell" that was sent to CCLA the leaders. For many, "Declaration of Caldwell", which the CCLA had published in its bulletin No.4, contemplated the possibility of cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church. Some of these people, particularly in Argentina, had decided not to attend Panama because they felt that their views did not count, especially as they had not even received a reply to their statement.

The Conferences were to be held in several countries in South America following the Panama Congress had to deal with such criticisms and misgivings. The Conference at Buenos Aires, Argentina on March 14-18, 1916, was obviously one of the toughest that the CCLA

had to face. Before the Conference a CCLA deputation managed to have a meeting with those who had refused to come to the Panama Congress and who consequently were not interested in taking part in any further conference organised by the CCLA. They met with representatives of Baptist churches, the Evangelical Union of South America and the Plymouth Brethren. As was expected the churches' leaders brought forward their protest against the "Declaration of Caldwell". The CCLA deputation tried to assure them that they did not intend make any deal with the Roman Catholic Church, and promise to help get an explanation of why their protest had not received an acknowledgment from New York. It was also suggested that the protest itself could be entered in the records of the conference together with the names of the signatories.¹²³ Every effort was made to avoid any misunderstanding, and the report indeed reflected this concern:

The conference regrets that no answer was received from the executive committee of the Panama Congress to the protest signed by a large number of the Christian workers in Argentina against the statement of the purpose of the Congress made in Bulletin No.IV and ask that a full explanation be sent to them.¹²⁴

There were some basis for the concern of the conservative Protestant churchmen in Argentina had good ground. The organisers of the Panama Congress sought to avoid controversy with the Roman Catholic Church. Yet in this the leadership of the congress had not succeeded. On the contrary the debate on this question was very lively.

Voices similar to those of the Argentines were impossible to silence. Alvaro Reis, for instance, a distinguished Brazilian leader challenged the delegates to see "the facing of the Roman Church throughout South America " as part of the purpose of the congress.¹²⁵

William B. Allison, one of the few missionaries working in Guatemala, warned of the danger of a "Protestant defence of Romanism" on the ground that it discouraged Roman Catholic people from an "acceptance of evangelical teaching".¹²⁶

Protestant Missionaries in Latin America, like Allison, believed that their work would get no benefit from any cooperation between Protestant churches and the Roman Catholic Church.

The Bible Societies always found it difficult to justify the search for good relations with the Roman Catholic Church, especially as they had suffered from her old prejudices about the distribution of the Bible in Latin America. This is why A.R.Stark, of British and Foreign Bible Society, in the discussion of the "Report of Cooperation and Unity" at Panama categorically asserted that the differences between Protestantism and Catholicism could not "be explained away or modified".¹²⁷ He based his view on the following four statements:

- (1) Those who favour an alliance with Romanism fail to realize the importance of the religious and theological considerations which gave rise to Protestantism at the Reformation, and which still divide the two by an impassable gulf.
- (2) Romanism is a mighty working system, a spiritual hierarchy, claiming divine authority over the souls of the men.
- (3) Romanism has a highly organized and efficient army of priests who, by virtue of their supernatural

authority, claim the right to direct the conduct of men in this life and to pronounce upon their fate hereafter. This constitutes a spiritual monarchy claiming supreme authority over men's souls. (4) It is the question of free development of the soul of the Christian under the influence of the Word of God and applied by the Holy Spirit and the minister, or the moulding of the soul under the complete control and intervention of the priest.¹²⁸

Others rejected the promotion of good relations with the Roman Catholic Church on more clever grounds. S.W. Chester of the Presbyterian Church (USA) said that all references in the "Report on Cooperation and Unity" to working with the Roman Catholic Church should be eliminated. He maintained that this was in "the interest of peace and good will, as well as in accordance with fidelity to the truth". Making use of the claim of the CCLA that many Roman Catholic faithfuls had abandoned their church Chester implied that any attempts to reconcile Protestant work with the Roman Catholic Church would only drive away these disaffected Catholics from Protestantism. "It might have" said Chester, "the effect of defeating the irenic purposes we have in our approach towards all the individual members of that communion who are now willing to cooperate with us in any branch of our work". For him the cooperation was already revealed in the fact that many Roman Catholic parents were sending their children to Protestant schools.¹²⁹

There is some similarity between the treatment given to matters concerning Latin America at the Edinburgh Conference and to matters concerning the Roman Catholic Church at the Panama Congress. Both

were virtually banned while the conferences were going on. Yet once they were over the parties interested in such matters did whatever they wanted. In Panama none of the main leaders of the CCLA dared to speak ill of the Roman Catholic Church; but they were unsuccessful in their attempt to tried to prevent others from doing so. In truth the CCLA faced a dilemma. They did not want to offend the educated elite whom they wanted to win, and they realized that contact with them could be severed if the Protestant message was based mainly on opposition to the Roman Catholic Church. The other side of the dilemma that the CCLA required the support of existing Protestant workers in Latin America, and their views on the Roman Catholic Church were often very negative. In attempting to resolve the dilemma the CCLA in practice developed two lines of discourse depending on the audience. They showed themselves as anti-Roman Catholic when they were among Protestant circles in Latin America; and as conciliators when among ecumenical and secular circles. CCLA's official organ La Nueva Democracia was a clear example of this ambivalence. This aimed to gain the confidence of intellectuals and educated circles. So the image of Protestantism expressed there was that of a modern religion concerned with the welfare of the region. It was considered distasteful to print any reference hostile to the Roman Catholic Church. In truth, this was probably more a matter of tactics than of conviction. Most CCLA leaders deep down shared the view of those conservative missionaries in Latin America. Therefore we

should not be surprised at the statement of Inman, in 1917, that there could not be any compromise with the Roman Catholic Church:

The issue between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism is clear and distinct. Every evangelical Christian should be ready to state these vigorously and dispassionately when occasion demands it. There is no one who understands the least thing about conditions in Latin America that doesn't realize that those are the last countries where there can be any compromise on this question. The progressive leaders of national life themselves would be the first to condemn any winking at these abuses whereby the established Church has so hindered progress through the centuries...¹³⁰

8. John Fox's criticism

It is clear, that the CCLA leaders were well aware of the tensions that surrounded their work. Yet the official documents of the Panama Congress did not reflect the whole range of criticism which they were under. This is why we are going to direct special attention to John Fox, who was one the strongest opponent of CCLA and of the Panama Congress. His article in The Princeton Theological Review of 1917: "Christian Unity and the Panama Congress", is probably the most scathing criticism there was of the organization and strategy that the CCLA wanted to foster in Latin America. The article written after the Panama Congress took place, reveals a great deal of knowledge of his subject. He had consulted the official three volumes of documents of the Congress and also the analysis that Harlam P. Beach had made in his Renaissant Latin America(1916). There are also many indications that he had direct information from participants in the Congress.

We have seen that the CCLA wanted to show that the Panama Congress was in line with the Edinburgh Conference. First of all, the Edinburgh Conference had been an extraordinary event with which almost everyone in the Protestant world wanted to be linked. And secondly, the efforts in Latin America badly needed the legitimation that could be got from its connection with that great conference.

The criticism of John Fox affirmed this link of Panama with that of Edinburgh, yet the thrust of his argument was in the opposite direction from that of the CCLA. Fox had not been pleased with the conference in Edinburgh, and his concern was that the Congress in Panama had repeated many of the errors of the Edinburgh Conference. His article did not acknowledge any good of the Congress, Although he admitted that he could not be "cold-hearted towards the obvious good that comes out of such a meeting". He was also clear that he "ought not to be indifferent to the defects and dangers of such a movement as it represents".¹³¹ Contrary to the mood of optimism that prevailed among North American Protestant missionary societies, he chose to see nothing but tragedy in the Panama Congress.

The basis of Fox's critique of CCLA leaders was that they were not only unable to distance their plans from the Edinburgh Conference, but that they chose to copy its procedures. He saw the Panama Congress as part of the strategy of the Committee of Continuation of the Edinburgh Conference. It was simply an extension of the series of conferences that Mott had in Asia in 1912-1914.¹³²

For him the idea that the Panama Congress would do what Edinburgh did elsewhere was unconvincing. He did not know anything of the growing interest that North American Protestant missions were showing in Latin America. Therefore he failed to understand the Panama Congress as part of a global strategy and saw it only as a reaction to the rejection which had happened in Edinburgh. "The chief and avowed reason", for this rejection said Fox, "was the opposition to such mission by high Anglicans".¹³³

The influence and power in Panama of some of the great players of the Edinburgh Conference like Speer and Mott encouraged Fox to see in it a mere continuation of the Edinburgh Conference. He did not believe that the real presidency was exercised by the Uruguayan Eduardo Monteverde, the formal president. He saw Speer as "the chairman, of most of the sessions and as the "real "Moderator"; and Mott became, as Fox derogatorily said, Speer's "coadjutor Bishop", as chairman of the "Business Committee".¹³⁴

Freedom of expression was one of the virtues that the leaders of the CCLA attributed to the Panama Congress. For Fox, however, the leading members had dominated every stage of the Congress. The gathering was guided by procedures which from the beginning prevented dialogue and debate. The chairmen of the commissions had time to present their points, while the delegates were hardly given time to respond. Fox saw as out of proportion the fact that the chairmen were given forty minutes "to defend their position and

findings" and the others in the audience had just five minutes. For him the dialogue was simply an illusion, especially as the delegates had to put their responses into writing and the chairmen could decide whether they should speak or not: "This killed real debate...The chairman did his part fairly under this monstrous rule, which annulled all ordinary parliamentary usage".¹³⁵

In short, Fox was convinced that the Congress decisions and plans had all been previously decided and approved by the CCLA leaders. What they wanted was to connect in their efforts with the World Conference of 1910 in Edinburgh: The way the Congress was organised "gave to Dr. Mott and his coadjutors immense power to shape the findings of the Conference in a manner accordant with that conceived to be the best results of the Edinburgh Conference".¹³⁶

Fox, however, was not questioning the power per se exercised by the CCLA leaders in the Panama Congress, but the implications that it had of theological discussion there. They had banned discussion of topics that must be central in the agenda of the Congress, e.g. the Roman Catholic Church, and had imposed their views:

It may greatly shock some of the loving hearts that were at the Congress to say that some keen discussion of moot points might not have been amiss in the Congress, provided there was room for free discussion and an opportunity to vote without the permission of a Business Committee. Why should not this have been discussed: e.g. by what methods, with what arguments, under what circumstances should missionaries and missionary teachers take up in detail the Bible doctrine of the Virgin Mary and its counterfeit in Roman Catholic Theology? The Worship of Saints, False

Miracles, Purgatory, the Seat of Authority in Religion,, the Right of Private Judgment. Why should not some of these questions have been discussed with a view to missionary efficiency and cooperation. They have the most direct and powerful effect upon all missionary work. The Commission Report, apropos of Virgin worship, advised all to "preach the mediation of Christ and false ideas will fall way."¹³⁷

This reflected the hold that the Edinburgh Conference had on that in Panama, which was something that its leaders themselves had not denied. The difference was that for Fox the Edinburgh Conference had been a failure, while for the leaders of the CCLA it was an inspiration and model. Fox saw in Edinburgh a precedent for what he considered the "un-democratic, un-American, un-Protestant" application of procedures in Panama".¹³⁸

The Panama Congress can be seen as a break with that of Edinburgh in that it symbolised that Latin America had become, once for all, a land of mission for the largest North American Protestant missions. Yet Fox did not see it like that. The view of the Roman Catholic Church indicated clearly that Panama was carrying on in the same pattern as that of Edinburgh. He also hinted that the High Anglicans view had influenced in the way the Roman Catholic Church was addressed in Panama. Anglicans, in Edinburgh did not want to offend the Roman Catholic Church, and the CCLA fell into the same trap. Besides, Fox believed that the broad theological framework which left the door open to Roman Catholic leaders to participate at Panama, mirrored the ethos of the Edinburgh Conference which had instructed the Committee of Continuation to put aside matters concerned with

doctrinal or ecclesiastical differences of the different denominations".¹³⁹ Fox thought that in Panama there were intentions not to trouble two groups: The Episcopalians, who "might be embarrassed" and "a large body of dissatisfied Catholic laymen in Latin America, whom it is desirable not to drive away".¹⁴⁰

However the CCLA had no other option. Speer and most the other founders of the CCLA always argued that their plans had been motivated by "irenic" intentions and by the real needs of Latin American countries, rather than by the defects of the type of Christianity that was already there.

There was also sensitivity to the prestige of John R. Mott, who had become the leader of the Committee of Continuation of the Edinburgh Conference. But Fox simply saw concordance with the view of the High Anglicans, whom he described as people "who recognise the "Bishop of Rome" as rightly ministering to the Latin American countries as part of his See." He went further by saying:

Some errors the Congress made [were] natural errors. Protestants do not agree wholly among themselves as to all the points to be made against Rome. It is well known that the High Church party in Episcopal churches regard the Bishop of Rome with a courtesy, which he scarcely can be said to reciprocate, and to do this in spite of his assumption of powers and prerogatives which they do not concede to him. The great body of Protestants find much more serious grounds of protest. What is and what ought to be the general Protestant attitude toward Romanism? Is there any need for emphasizing its principles and practices now in Latin America? ¹⁴¹

Obviously any positive reference to the Roman Catholic Church

was an outrage for people like Fox. He even considered amiss the cordial message from the Roman Catholic Archbishop of the West Indies to the Panama Congress.

Fox also criticized the few references that some reports, such as that one on "The Relevant facts in Latin American Civilization" made a conciliatory spirit. For him the CCLA could not have it both ways; it could not both "conciliate and be faithful".¹⁴² If the intention is to acknowledge some good in the Roman Catholic Church, this must be accompanied with the denouncement of her mistakes with regard to the worship of the Virgin, the Papal claim, and the supremacy of the Bible.¹⁴³ He spoke well for instance of the position taken by the Roman Catholic Church against the modern view on the Bible; yet it was not enough as to think that was free of blame:

The Romanists are our allies in the defence of the absolute truth and authority of the whole Bible. They are sound on the Trinity, the Deity of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit and the supernatural; and we should welcome their aid in resisting naturalism in all its forms. But on other points we must part company with them and not be mealy-mouthed or mealy-minded in saying plainly what we mean about their errors.¹⁴⁴

Another criticism that Fox made about the Panama Congress was it failed to take a strong stand against the modern view of the Bible. He was persuaded that the Congress had not taken advantage of the occasion to address both Romanism and rationalism "the twin evils which we confront in Latin America to-day". So, he went on, "it was an army without a flag or a bugle".¹⁴⁵ This he read as an implicit

token of the sympathy of the organisers for these ideas, and their inability to deal with "the burning questions of the day". He hinted that the organisers were less outspoken on the issue of Biblical criticism because "the vast majority of the Congress would have been outraged by any open attack on the historical truthfulness of the Bible". Yet they could not altogether hide their fondness for modern view of the Bible. He saw it in the report on "the Christian Message and the Educated Classes": It had "one of those ambiguous and delicately phrased intimations that the old view of the Bible may be set aside, in part at least, if we are to meet modern needs".¹⁴⁶ The report on "The aim and message of the Evangelical Churches" was another section in which Fox saw also inclinations to support "biblical criticism". Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, despite his liberal tendencies is there recommended as a helpful tool. Knowing the background of the war that conservatives in the United States had declared against the modern ideas on the Bible, he saw in some paragraphs a veiled acceptance of those ideas. He put it thus:

Another paragraph on the Bible in which "the modern view" seemed to be still more delicately and suggestively intimated was. "Nothing which is declared by Christ to be necessary for salvation can be added to or detracted from, by any other authority, without a deep injury being done to the human soul, and a deep wrong to its eternal interests. Used in this sane, historical and spiritual way, the Bible can become to the preacher and his hearers an unfailing source of power in the delivery of a penetrating and constructive message." [check] We wish do not injustice. It is not quite clear what is meant; but if we are in the least familiar with the modern controversies about the Bible we know too well what is

meant by such phrases as "this sane historical and spiritual way" and "this reasonable modern and constructive argument". They embody usually the corner-stone of the "modern view" that the Bible is only partly true and that criticism must determine for us what part of it we may believe and what must disbelieve. One of the most eminent members of the Congress in public discussion declared with transparent honesty that we must, in dealing with Latin America, accept the modern view of the Bible and the doctrine of evolution.¹⁴⁷

Fox identified with those who had opposed the Congress, whom Beach labelled as "hyper-evangelicals".¹⁴⁸ "Hyper evangelicals", he said, "in the Panama dialect means 'Hyper-Protestants', but a watered down Protestantism soon ceases to be evangelical". He concluded by saying that the theses of Luther and not of anyone else must be nailed in Latin America:

Here then was the situation -an attitude of timidity before the unabated claims of the Roman power, a tolerant, doubtful -with some approving- attitude to amendments to the Bible proposed by modern critics. Is this really the message that Latin America needs? Do we propose to nail these theses upon the Church door as an addition to the ninety-five theses that Luther put there? ¹⁴⁹

The emphasis on unity and cooperation that the CCLA wanted to promote in Latin America was, for Fox, after the issue of the Roman Catholic Church, the most important failing of the Panama Congress. For him the leaders of the Congress failed to understand what the term unity meant. He claimed the fact that the Congress was completely controlled by its leaders, yet its findings were presented as if they were the product of general consultation and discussion. Expressions such as "the unanimous judgment of those present" were simply untrue.

The mood towards internationalism that marked the expansion of the West at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century had greatly influenced the view on Christian unity that had been given such importance in the Edinburgh Conference. There were no barriers that, according to people like Mott, Oldham, and Speer, that could not be knocked down. According to Fox

We are constantly bidden now- a-days to "think in Continents". How little regard is paid to the great Continent of thought! This was true at Panama. Speaking quite broadly and making due allowance for exceptions, its key-note was unity by minimizing the doctrinal and ecclesiastical differences between the various members of the Protestant group of Churches and on the ground of missionary expediency aiming at the abolition of these differences by largely ignoring them, and with at least a part of the leaders of the Congress, a distinct purpose of doing the same thing as with the graver differences that separate from Rome.¹⁵⁰

The CCLA view on unity, according to Fox, was characterised by five features. First, there was a search for power in those who were advocating unity and cooperation among Protestant churches. This means that much power was given to few persons: "large powers were put into the hands of a comparatively few persons who shaped the general policy for the whole body of co-operating churches in a given direction, just as the Edinburgh Conference did".¹⁵¹

Second, the leadership that began to lead the work of Protestant missions after the Edinburgh Conference was in a hurry to introduce a unity of aims among Protestant churches which would eventually end in organic unity. He went further to say that leadership wanted to impose their views from above and not through dialogue with the

officials of different denominations. In seeking to achieve their purposes Fox warned that they were attempting to control the missionary organizations by:

Seizing the existing machinery of Foreign Missions Boards and their elaborate subsidiary organizations, and using them for the purpose of bringing about first, co-operation, and finally organic union by ingenious indirection.¹⁵²

Third, the view on unity had deep religious deficiencies, for it was founded on things which were "the real foe to unity", namely, "lack of conviction of the truth, lack of knowledge of the truth, a half-hearted, shambling paltering, habit of mind". Furthermore he believed that Christian unity could not be a divine creation "except by the truth and in the truth, through Sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the truth." Hence he stated: "let the advocates of spurious unity fasten that verse to the twenty-first that may all be one".¹⁵³

Fourth, under their concept of unity in which there is no recognition for different views on religion, it would be easy, on the one hand, to quell opposition to the leaders' view, and on the other hand, to inspire in the mission fields ideas which were not in accordance with orthodoxy. He was concerned that the Panama Congress had become "a spoke in the wheel, a wheel revolving with ever increasing momentum" which contemplated a future "re-union with Rome" ¹⁵⁴ In addition there was no guarantee that the other "evil"; rationalism and the modern view of the Bible, would be prevented from entering the missions fields:

What changes of relationship, if any, are needed between the existing Protestant bodies in order to make a South American campaign effective? Should we throw down denominational lines altogether and make one great comprehensive Protestant or "Evangelical" Church? What kind of creed, polity, cultus will such a Church, if organized, have and hold? What guarantees can we give to believers in the doctrines of grace and to devout lovers of the Bible as an infallible book, that the plagues of modern Protestant Rationalism will not be added to the plague of Roman Ritualism in the newly planted churches, or in the "unified" church as Dr. Brown so stoutly argues there ought to be.¹⁵⁵

Five, the denominational features that had characterised Protestant denominations all along were like "giant oaks" unable to be changed. Therefore unity in the way it was interpreted by the CCLA was impossible to achieve however prestigious Mott, Speer and Browning might be as individuals:

The Anglican communion and its counter-part on this side of the sea, the Confessional Lutheran Churches, the Pan-Presbyterian family, Methodism with its splendid organization, the Independent, Congregational and Baptist Churches -these are not fungus growths or flowers that bloom in the spring; they are giant oaks, hardy mountain pines, cedars of Lebanon, [with] roots of doctrinal conviction, ordered government, devotional habit. It is hard to see how any one can seriously believe that they can be picked up and clapped together by a Business Committee or a Congress, or a hundred Congresses. Before the goal is reached the people will have something to say about whether they are to give up things which they believe and love with all their hearts, because a Continuation Committee or a concatenated jungle of similar Committees imagines that it can be done...The Calvinistic Churches love their Arminian allies as brethren and know well that there is much they can learn from them; but how foolish it is to pretend that they are not divided as to some very important questions. ¹⁵⁶

Conclusion

The Panama Congress reflected the official will of the most important authorities of Protestant missions in the United States. Their organisers dreamt of Latin America as a experimental missionary field in which the mistakes and conflicts of other fields might be avoided. We have seen how "unity" was the central motive of the CCLA leaders; hence their open animosity towards denominational divisions. There still remain issues that we have not approached, such as why the CCLA failed to break the old Protestant church structures which directed their work along denominational lines.

The importance of the speeches given at the Panama Congress rests on the fact that they are practically the only source that can give us a flavour of the kind of religion that Protestant missionary leaders wanted to foster in Latin America. They addressed the most central principles of Protestant theology.

Latin Americans' speeches reveal how limited was the theological perspective of this generation of educated Latin Americans whose churches became the first direct beneficiaries of the financial support that the CCLA mobilised for Latin America. The speech of Carlos Eduardo Pereira, from Brazil, is particularly interesting because it indicates how from the early Protestant missionaries found it hard to foster an indigenous Protestantism, and how Protestant missionaries themselves had become the major problem to achieving it.

Chapter IV

The World Missionary Conference and Protestantism in Latin America (Latin America: The Apple of Discord)

Introduction:

This chapter breaks the chronological order that we have had so far. It is in the framework of the Panama Congress that the importance of the Edinburgh Conference, as far as the expansion of Protestantism in Latin America was concerned, is fully understood.

By the time of the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910 North American Protestant missions had made up their mind to extend their work in Latin America. The effect of the Spanish-American War (1898) and the control of the Panama Canal area (1902) was to convince the United States of the need to strengthen their links with Latin America. Protestant missions in turn recognized the opportunities being created by the growing political and commercial influence of North America.

Though mission leaders had felt certain that the Edinburgh Conference would give an extraordinary boost to their intentions, this did not happen. North American plans for Latin America were not welcomed at Edinburgh.

The British, particularly the High Anglicans, considered all Protestant work in fields where other Christian communions were at work to be distasteful. The year before the Conference and as a main

condition to taking part in the event, High Anglicans had begun to demand from North Americans the dropping of Latin America from the purview of the Conference. After months of discussion and with the wise direction of J.H. Oldham the matter was settled in the way the High Anglicans wished.

We will outline the main arguments of this controversy by analyzing the copious and complex correspondence between J.H. Oldham and Anglican bishops, and between Oldham and J.R. Mott. Our claim in this section is that this controversy consolidated the North American view that something must be done about Latin America. So although Latin America was excluded in Edinburgh, this served to accelerate the process that led to the Panama Congress. Besides as some of the organisers of the Panama Congress had been very active in the North American committee of the Edinburgh Conference, they did not reject the work done there. On the contrary they made every effort to graft their plans for Latin America on to what had come out of the Conference. This indeed was greatly assisted by the participation of John R. Mott, a prominent leader of the Committee of Continuation of the Edinburgh Conference, who also became one of the leaders at Panama.

1. J.H. Oldham and J.R.Mott:

Leaders like J.H.Oldham (1874-1969) and J.R. Mott(1865-1955) were the life and soul of the successful Edinburgh Conference. Oldham

saved the Conference from breaking up over Latin American question, and Mott was vital in finding the money that the Conference required. Mott's essential pragmatism was complemented by Oldham's theological concern, and these complementary virtues made possible the success of the Conference.

Oldham had studied at Oxford where his work was characterised by "incisive thinking" and he was described as "a thinker and a philosopher".¹ Mott first met Oldham when on a visit to Oxford in 1891 to promote the activities of Student Volunteer Movement(SVM). Oldham was one of the student leaders recruited to the SVM in Great Britain. With Mott, Oldham became "the joint architect and engineer of the Edinburgh Conference".² In the controversy over Latin America Oldham was the great peacemaker between the two factions. He was later appointed editor of the International Review of Missions, organ of the Committee of Continuation of the Edinburgh Conference, that whose first issue was in 1912. Hopkins described the two personalities thus:

Oldham, sensitive to theological nuances and ecclesiastical subtleties, was quick to discern potential hazards in the complex relationships between the Committee and the two hundred or more boards it hoped to develop into its constituency. Mott, equally concerned with the central gospel message, perhaps tended to see individuals as members of groups and to measure their contributions in terms of finances or organization.³

Mott and Oldham represented two conflicting approaches in the run up to the Edinburgh Conference. Both reflected the misgivings and

differences that existed concerning missionary work, differences that came out well before the event.

There is no doubt that Mott had great respect for Oldham's intellectual capacity. As early as 1905, Oldham was asked to read the proof sheets of Mott's book: The Home Ministry and Modern Missions.⁴ The discrepancies in their views first appeared in this earlier period when both were caught up in the work of the Student Volunteer Movement and with the YMCA, which had as their watchword: "The Evangelization of the World in this Generation." Oldham believed that Mott and Protestant missions in North America had a narrow view of evangelization. In writing to Tatlow of YMCA in 1907, he expressed some of his misgivings. He understood the Watchword as meaning that within a generation all would have the opportunity of responding to the Gospel, but suspected that the North Americans interpreted it as meaning all had to respond within this generation.

The crux of the whole matter lies in the word "evangelisation": or to be more exact, the seeming necessity for defining evangelization...The choice of the phrase "the evangelization of the world in this generation" as distinct from "the evangelization of this generation" seems to compel one to define in some degree what we anticipate the condition of the world might be, and what we desire it should be, when this generation has passed away. Here the trouble at once begins. Mott has practically answered the question by saying one missionary to every fifteen thousands people...[but] By evangelisation we can mean nothing less than that people should have a fair chance on accepting or rejecting the gospel. have they had this when there is one foreign missionary to fifty thousands persons. A thousands times no. ⁵

In this regard Oldham was clear that Europeans and North Americans had different perceptions:

It is exceedingly interesting to me to notice how much enthusiasm for the Watchword is a matter of temperament, and especially of national temperament. The Americans with their strong practical tendency had never had any difficulty regarding the Watchword. The Germans on the other hand, with their determination to try to get to the bottom of things have never accepted the watchword, and in my judgment never will. The English and Scotch stand temperamentally between the two and consequently you find in this country an endless discussion and debate and uncertainly with regard to the Watchword...I am coming to think that the phraseology of the Watchword is itself responsible for their difficulty. Possibly "the evangelisation of this generation: would obviate it.⁶

Mott was well aware that Oldham had a distinctly different view of missionary work. This was evident when Oldham went to the United States in connection with the row over Latin America in 1909. Though on that occasion Mott was away in Russia, Mott wrote to his surrogate in New York, giving instructions on how Oldham's visit could best be handled. He said "that special efforts be made to convert Oldham from his mistaken views" and suggested that he should be prevented from talking privately with members of the Conference committee.⁷

Oldham was interested not only in pure theological matters but also in the application of the Christian message. He was concerned that the behaviour of Western colonial powers abroad was a real hindrance to missionary work. He expressed this in a quarterly letter of the

Scottish National Councils of YMCAs in 1907, in arguing for the importance of YMCA's social work in India:

We know that there is a good deal of national prejudice...This natural feeling is very much intensified by the fact that in India we are the ruling race. There is constantly present a sense of the relation of conquerors and conquered. I am afraid that this is often encouraged by our overbearing manner, which I think is often encouraged by our national characteristics...It has always seemed to me that the fact that we are here not only as foreigners, which is of course itself a disadvantage, but also as members of the conquering and governing race, is one of the peculiar difficulties of missionary work in India. When we speak we are met by prejudice. Men think that we have forced our Government upon them, and now we want to force our religion, and so they brace themselves up to resist it.⁸

2. John R. Mott and Latin America

At the time of the Edinburgh Conference Mott had a clear understanding that Latin American countries must be part of the North American Protestant missionary strategy. Mott had shown an early interest in the religious condition of Latin America. His first direct contact with this region was in 1896, when he had travelled there. As a result of this trip Mott acquired a sound knowledge and social life of people there. He also became aware of the difficulties that Protestant work would encounter in countries under the hold of the Roman Catholic Church.⁹ However the trip did not convince him to include Latin America in his plans for worldwide evangelization, as illustrated by the fact that he omitted Latin America in his Strategic Points in the World's Conquest, written in 1897.

Africa and Asia were at that time seen as the regions most in need of Christian missionary activity. This explains why Latin America was not included in the earliest worldwide trips that Mott made in 1895. Mott had not great respect for the presence of the Roman Catholic Church within those countries, but like many North Americans had not yet come to recognize the importance of the region.

The fact that Latin America was not part of Mott's tours in 1895 has been seen as evidence that he, did not consider Latin America as a land of Protestant mission.¹⁰ However this was not the case. Although he did not take the line of those who had struggled to promote Protestantism in Latin America during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, he was awakened by the Spanish-American War(1898) to see what Latin America might be, geo-politically speaking, for the United States, and also to recognize the challenge that the region posed for North American religious organizations interested in the expansion of Protestantism.

This new political juncture compelled Mott to consider Latin America as a region that Protestantism must affect. As chief executive of the YMCA, he placed Latin America, alongside Asia and Africa, as "the great battlefields of the Christian faith".¹¹ It had been "cut off from the influences of pure and aggressive Christianity", and its people were, in his view, "a vast flock without a shepherd".¹²

In the decade before the Edinburgh Conference Mott's writings reflected a more committed view as far as Protestant work in Latin

America was concerned. In his book, The Evangelization of the World in this Generation (1900) he observed that "nearly the whole Roman Catholic world has been opened to Protestant workers within fifty years".¹³

2.1. Help of Neocolonialism

The papers of Mott indicate that his focus on Latin America emerged with the new interest that the United States had there after the Spanish-American War. He saw the promotion of Protestantism as part and parcel of the influence that his country would exercise there in the near future. He argued that Latin American countries, as well as the Philippines, were part of the United States. Besides this, he thought that those countries were longing and waiting for help from the United States. His view was expressed more clearly when he wrote in 1905 that the era of "the neglected continent" was over, for "it is now regarded as possibly the most accessible continent of the world because of its sea, river, and railway communications".¹⁴ He reasoned that in Latin America, as in Asia, "every capital city had been occupied".¹⁵

Hopkins, one of Mott's biographers, has noted that Mott believed that the countries where the United States were in control after the Spanish American War were looking to the North, "and to no other part of the world, for guidance in all these matters", and that the solidarity of their interests rested "upon the identity of our fundamental political principles".¹⁶

According to Mott the revival of the Monroe Doctrine by the United States suggested "religious as well as political responsibility". He went on to say that the War had opened the eyes of North Americans, and made them realize "the full force and aptness of the designation of South America as the neglected continent". So he asked: "Is it not our solemn duty to atone for generations of neglect?".¹⁷

Mott's argument was based on the conviction that the Protestant colonial powers were now ready to foster the spreading of Protestantism in their colonies:

The sway of Protestant nations extends over three-eighths of the population of Asia and Oceania. The vast continent of Africa is largely under the direct rule of Christian powers. The treaties and relationships existing between the great Protestant nations and nearly all the remainder of the non-Christian world are of such a character as to insure to missionary forces the largest freedom of access and of all reasonable protection.¹⁸

Besides Mott thought that the modernisation that capitalism was introducing in colonial areas was speeding the spread of Protestantism. In this the development of railway networks in Asia, Africa and Latin America was vital. It had made the people of those continents "much more accessible to Christian propaganda", although he also acknowledged that it also "exposed these multitudes to the devastating touch of that which is evil in Western civilization".¹⁹ Mott based his argument on the need to introduce of Protestant work in Latin America on religious and ethical, as well as on socio-political reasons.

First, like many Protestant observers he believed that the Roman Catholic Church had failed in Latin America. Secondly, he saw in Latin America the same moral vices that Protestant missions had confronted in Africa and Asia. In 1905 he observed that the practice of gambling and intemperance was a "national contagion". "The most acute observers and those who have had largest opportunities to learn the facts", said Mott, "see the most frightful ravages of demon drink as those wrought in the port cities of Asia, Africa, and South America".²⁰ This suggests that Mott believed inwardly what the Edinburgh Conference denied with its decision of omitting Latin America as a land of Protestant mission; that is to say, that there was no difference between the non-Christian countries and Latin America. In 1915 in the midst of the preparation for the Panama Conference Mott spoke of the "double responsibility" that Christianity had in Asia, Africa and Latin America:

The cheek of the visitor from a Christian land blushes with shame as he sees in the port cities of Asia, Africa. and Latin America the alarming prevalence of evils...Some of these evils are eating like gangrene into the less highly organized races of mankind. Christianity has a double responsibility.²¹

The third point in Mott's argument for the need of Protestantism was the religious situation of the educated people in Latin America. Here he was especially influenced by the work of the YMCA, which convinced him of a the trend of irreligiosity that was overwhelming the students in these countries. Hopkins says that this led Mott to think with "overwhelming force" that "a special burden of

responsibility rests upon the Christians of the United States for the establishment of Christ's Kingdom among the people of Latin America".²²

In his interest in the expansion of Protestantism in Latin America, and particularly his involvement in the organization of the Panama Congress Mott did not follow the Edinburgh's line, as some of his critics had made out.

There is no doubt that Mott was not pleased with the attitude that Edinburgh took with regard to Protestant work in Latin America. Indeed at times he sought to undo the effects of that decision, working for example, to include Latin America in the work of Committee of Continuation of the Edinburgh Conference.

There is every to accept Hopkins's description of the preparation for Panama as the "most significant event for missions with which [Mott] was identified in the years between 1914 and American entry in to the war in 1917".²³ Such was Mott's involvement that he was selected as chairman of an international advisory "committee of experts, interested in the public life of Latin America, Europe and North America", and later was appointed to chair the business committee at Panama. He also lent his YMCA staff working in these countries to assist in the preparation for the congress. Conspicuous among his staff were; (1) Etha C. Colton who was a member of the committee on arrangements and of the commission on survey and occupation; (2) Harry Wade Hicks who chaired the commission on the

home base and was also on the committee on arrangements; (3) Fennell P. Turner and Charles D. Hurrey who worked for the Panama Congress; (4) Charles F. Fahs and Charles Ewald who became secretaries of the Congress. The latter was the recording secretary in English; and Fahs worked as the principal secretary of the conference.

Fahs also had the opportunity to draw on the experience he had acquired at the Edinburgh Conference, where he had played an important role in the preparation of the atlas. He later accompanied Mott, as personal secretary, in his trips to Asia in between 1912 and 1914 in connection with the Continuation Committee.²⁴

Mott saw the Panama Congress as "a partial compensation for Edinburgh's major omission".²⁵ He believed, moreover, that the experience of Edinburgh should be placed at the service of the meeting in Panama, which helps to explain the similarity of many of the findings of both conferences. He made it clear at Panama that in determining policies for the future of Christianity in Latin America the experience of other fields should be borne in mind. He stressed this when the issue of the production and dissemination of Christian literature was under discussion.²⁶

The experience of Edinburgh was continually brought up in Panama. The atmosphere that should prevail in Panama was, in Mott's view, the same as that described by the Bishop of Oxford, regarding that of Edinburgh: "We come into an atmosphere in which men come to loathe to differ and determined to understand". He went

on:

[Here] we will come to loathe any misunderstanding of each other, any differing from one another in what is vital. And we will do something more important than that. We will pass out into that clear zone where we are determined to understand one another in order better to cooperate.²⁷

The sense of duty and urgency, so characteristic of Mott's

entire life, was also evident at Panama. He read the occasion as a sign that "the time has come to take this whole hemisphere into our view."

Therefore he thought that his feelings and expectations about the Congress were also God's. "Believe me Jesus Christ sees nothing less, as He looks up and down this hemisphere, than all its needs, all its possibilities".²⁸ Mott acknowledged that human alone would not be enough to secure the conference objectives. The new epoch that the Congress was bringing in, a "glorious age" as Mott called it, was only possible with the superhuman force that he believed was already operating in the Congress:

I love to think that there is around us now, that there will be around us during all these coming sessions, an atmosphere of superhuman resource, that there are powers ready to break out in us, and through us into every nation into which we shall return, that will make the coming age glorious in contrast with what lies behind us.²⁹

The organization that was taking place in Panama was in the direct interest of God because "nothing else will satisfy Him than for us to plan for touching most helpfully every nation and every man of these republics".³⁰ Because of this assurance that the event was in God's plans, Mott thought that its outcome was destined to be

extraordinary. In a veiled reference to the Panama Canal, he hoped that something will happen in the Congress that would make Panama a special place: "a name with which the world will associate another thing that is truly great". His passion for what he did, and the religious mysticism which strengthened his vision, encouraged him to see the success of the event as inevitable. "There is something strangely moving", said Mott, "about a Congress like this".³¹

The outcome that Mott ~~must~~ hoped would emerge from the Panama Congress was a regional strategy founded on interdenominational unity. In this, Mott's thinking was in line with Robert Speer and the other people who were involved in the organization of the Congress. The absence of unity had been, in their view, the main defect of Protestantism in Latin America so far. Despite the presence of Protestant organization in the region, Mott asserted, that they would "have to confess with humiliation" that they were "painfully lacking in united strategy". However he was sure that this mistake was now being corrected. Coming out of the Panama Congress was a "grand strategy" which, according to Mott, was most needed in Latin America.³² In achieving this the leaders of the Panama Congress extolled its "scientific" character, which they associated with the Edinburgh Conference. Unity and strategy, expressed in the comparison of methods and experiences of other fields, and in the research of the religious needs of the missions fields, were some of the main marks of what at that time began to be considered as a "science of

missions".

3. Latin America: The apple of discord

The first impression that one gets on reading the nine official volumes of the Edinburgh Conference is that there, everything went smoothly and without incident. This is probably true of the ten days of the Conference; but not of the three years of its organizing. There were many obstacles which threatened to destroy the fragile unity that the Conference wanted to achieve. The objective of the Conference, "to Consider Missionary Problems in relation to the Non-Christian World", seemed at first enough to unify the diversity of interests that were represented in Edinburgh. However this aim was, not enough to prevent clashes of interest.

The Edinburgh Conference of 1910 brought to the fore the differences between European Protestant churches and North American Churches had on their understanding of foreign missionary work. The main contention between them was whether or not to consider countries under the influence of the Roman Catholic Church as spheres for Protestant mission. Both sides had strong views as to this. The Anglican Church, for instance, rejected any action that could offend, and consequently jeopardise its traditional link with the Roman Catholic Church.

The Conference highlighted how little North American and European Protestant missionary leaders knew of each other, and how

little agreement there was on basic ideas. This was clear, for instance, in the definition of "the non-Christian World". The leaders of the largest missionary societies in Great Britain and Germany regarded the "non-Christian World" exclusively as those countries where Christianity had not had any influence whatsoever, as in Muslim countries. In the United States, however, people understood it quite differently, believing that concept included those non-Christian populations, and nominal Christians, particularly Roman Catholics, in Christian countries.

These conflicting views came to the fore the year before the Conference, when some Anglican Bishops learned the intention of some to introduce, as part of the programme, Protestant work in countries where the Greek Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church had a large religious influence. The main controversy was over the inclusion of Latin America within the purview of the Conference, a thing that influential North Americans wanted. It was the wisdom and statesmanship of J.H. Oldham which prevented this issue from ruining the conference, though at a high price. It meant that the interests of North Americans, as far as Latin America was concerned, were left out the conference. Yet this was the inevitable price of a conference whose leaders had reckoned as essential the official participation of the Anglican Church. So the Edinburgh planners, as Oldham revealed later, had to face this major obstacle:

Could full Anglican participation --not that of the Evangelicals alone, but of the whole Communion, "High" and "Low"-be won? Throughout the nineteenth century High Churchmen had remained aloof from almost every interdenominational event shared in by other missionaries. But in 1910 the Church of England did co-operate and in doing so provided one of Edinburgh's most notable achievements, one fraught with significance for the whole future of the Ecumenical movement.³³

The problem emerged in connection with the work of Commission I, "Carrying the Gospel to the non-Christian World", which had John R. Mott as its chairman and the British clergyman, George Robson, of the United Free Church of Scotland as vice-chairman.

The atlas which was prepared by North Americans for the Commission also became a source of controversy. Though theoretically the organizers, European and North American had agreed not to include Latin America in the purview of the Conference, the Atlas initially included the work of Protestants in some countries where the Roman Catholic Church was also working, notably latin America. For fear that their relationship with the Roman Catholic Church might be damaged, High Anglicans strongly objected to this.

So on the 20th February, 1909 there began a running but increasingly tense correspondence between High Anglican Bishops and J.H. Oldham, in which the Bishops warned that they were ready to withdraw their support. The letter of the Bishop of Southwark to Oldham clearly showed this:

I write on the question which, as I have quite recently learnt, has come up with regard to the possible inclusion in the scope of the World Missionary Conference, of missions or enterprises directed towards other Christian communions...The point is of so much importance, and it is necessary to get it perfectly clear, that I ought to say for the Bishop of Birmingham, Bishop Montgomery and myself, that any cooperation by us in the Conference must be dependent of its being consistently and entirely loyal to the principle that it deals (whether in statistics or otherwise) with Christian efforts to carry the Gospel to non-Christians, and with these alone. Any departure from this principle would, we are certain, lead to the entire secession from the Conference of a large section of numbers of the Church of England, and very probably of others with them. We have full proof of this in letters which lie before us.³⁴

Oldham's letter of the 23rd February tried to reassure the Bishop, though rather ambiguously, that things were not as he was thinking. He began by saying "I trust that the following explanation may be sufficient to remove your anxiety". "There is no such thing", said Oldham, "as to permit the Conference "to deal with Missions or enterprises directed towards other Christian communities". He explained that places like Latin America would appear in the atlas only in order to mention the work among non-Christians there: "It is quite clear...that the returns are intended to give only the figures relating to the circulation of the Scriptures among non-Christians."

However Oldham also admitted that some people in the United States who were working on the atlas might not be following the official line: "It is possible however, that the American Sub-Committee may have not been sufficiently careful to see that the general principle which is laid upon it is carried out with complete consistency". The

ambiguity of Oldham's answer becomes still more evident when he showed certain sympathy for the North American view on the matter:

The sole reason why I am not able at the present moment to give you full and complete information on this point is that the preparation of the Statistics is an extremely complicated and difficult matter, and it will be necessary for us to learn the facts exactly in each instance before we can be certain how the general principle is to be applied. The only instances in which practical difficulties may possibly arise are, I imagine, South America and the Near East. In South America there is, I understand, a very large and neglected half-christianised population, nominally Roman Catholic. It may be difficult for American Societies working in South America to draw a hard and fast line between their work among pagans and their work among those who are Christians only in name... ³⁵

On the same day that Oldham replied to the Bishop of Southwark, he also wrote to Mott informing him on the situation, mentioning that the Bishops of Birmingham and London, had decided to suspend their membership of their commissions. These bishops had influential positions on different Commissions of the Conference, and Oldham was concerned that because of this controversy their work there could be affected. He feared, for instance, that the Bishop of Birmingham could refuse to sign a letter that the Commission on Education would issue soon. He thought that if the Bishop refused, it "would be disastrous." He went on:

I hope that in the light of the explanation, he will reconsider his decision. You will see that the Statistical Returns must not include work done among Roman Catholics or the Eastern Churches, or else there will be a secession of the entire Anglican Church from the Conference. Personally I think that the Bishops are quite unnecessarily scared, [but] evidently the Bishop of Birmingham thinks we propose to

include Missions to Roman Catholics(e.g. Europe) which is certainly not the case. Once we succeed in entirely disabusing his mind of this idea, I do not think you will find him any way unreasonable as regards matters of detail.³⁶

Oldham he expressed his concern not to have compromised Mott's view or have created "any difficulty" for him. He went on: "I have deliberately spoken on behalf of the British members of the Conference, so as not to commit you or your Sub-Committee directly. It has been necessary, however, for me to give the most explicit assurances so far as we are concerned, or else there would be a rupture."³⁷

Another letter from the Bishop of Birmingham made Oldham realise that his letter had not had the effect intended, and that the whole Conference was in jeopardy. In this letter, dated 25th of February, the bishop pinpointed directly the question of South America:

I hope you clearly perceive no classification of Missions will serve my purpose in any way which ultimately leaves these South American Missions, intended for the conversion of Roman Catholics to some other kind of Christianity, within the purview of the Conference.³⁸

He put it in another way saying what if " Roman Catholics would consent to join our Conference?" "My own friends among Churchmen will be very much "awake" and alert on this subject".³⁹

Two days later Oldham wrote again to Mott, explaining that the "matter is more serious than I thought".⁴⁰ Still, Oldham believed that the problem could be sorted out through a dialogue between the

British and North American members of the Commission I.⁴¹

While Mott avoided mentioning the matter, he apparently believed that Oldham could settle the problem without damaging the interest of the missions in North America. However Oldham was becoming more outspoken on the need to placate High Anglicans. Though he understood that the whole question was causing trouble in North America, he believed that to save the conference one side had to be sacrificed. He was surely in a dilemma

I imagine that your societies will be very vehemently opposed to excluding from the Statistics their work in South America except in so far as this relates to those who are not even nominally Christians. On the other hand, unless we do this, the Bishop of Birmingham will secede, and I am afraid that if he does, twenty of the members of our Commissions will follow him, and the Church of England, so far as its real authorities are concerned, will be out of the Conference. I had hoped that in such a case as South America, the Bishop would have been willing to recognise that to a large extent, Christianity was merely nominal, and that he would, therefore, have allowed a good deal of the work in that country to be included in the returns. I do not now think he is likely to accept this view... I trust that you will not be unduly disquieted by the difficulties which have arisen.⁴²

On the 26th February Oldham was once again writing to the Bishop of Birmingham trying to convince him that there was no likelihood of the North Americans introducing Latin America in the purview of the Edinburgh Conference: "We mean that work among Roman Catholics should be excluded entirely from the official returns...All work that aims at the conversion of persons from one form of Christianity to another is necessarily excluded...There is nothing in the printed Statistical Schedules to suggest that this

principle will not be loyally observed." He further explained:

I regret that my letter of the 23rd inst. has apparently left you under some misapprehensions as to its exact meaning. I did not mean to suggest that the discrimination in the Statistics would be a mere matter of classification. All that I intended to suggest was that, in the special conditions prevailing in South America, it might be difficult for the American Societies to distinguish clearly in the statistical returns between converts and scholars drawn from the non-Christian elements of the population, and [from] the nominal Christians who might come within the influence of their evangelistic efforts. All work that aims at the conversion of persons from one form of Christianity to another is necessarily excluded from the purview of the Conference..⁴³

In addition he reiterated that the problem was not with all the North American members of Commission I, but only with a minority. He believed that once the minority found themselves deviating from the main purpose of the Conference to be inconsistent with the main purpose of the Conference they would give up their insistence on including Latin America. Oldham wanted at least to convince the Bishop of Birmingham of the importance of having the vice-chairman sign the letter of the commission, and of the Bishop allowing his name to continue appearing in the heading of the letter. If the bishop rejected that proposal, the organization of the Conference would suffer, in that it would make public its organisers.⁴⁴ In his reply the Bishop of Birmingham granted Oldham's points, but still put pressure on to ensure him that the North Americans would drop their intention to include information on work among Roman Catholic in Latin America. He therefore continued to speak with suspicion:

I think I may take your letter as authoritative and take it for granted that all work which aims at the conversion of persons from one form of Christianity to another is necessarily excluded from the purview of the Conference. Under these circumstances I will gladly allow my name to stand printed in the list of names of the members of the Commission. I venture now to suggest that a letter should be addressed to the Statistical Commissioners in America saying that it had been reported in England that items, i.e, the names of societies, had been admitted into their lists which appeared to violate the principle above stated: that it was quite essential that if the Commissions were to hold together in England the principle should be quite loyally accepted in these statistics as everywhere else; and that a number of the members of the Commission in England had asked for this assurance within a month. I still think it is quite reasonable to ask for this assurance from America within a month, and to that for my part I must hold.⁴⁵

On receiving this Oldham began to feel powerless. The same day he wrote to Mott: "one would be nearer the truth if one were to speak of the need for prayer rather than for statesmanship". Besides, it seemed that the British Committee was more determined to make it clear that the problem was now not only with the High Anglicans, but also with the whole British Committee of the Conference:

You will see from this and the preceding correspondence that the general position which we have taken is that the general basis of the Conference is quite explicit with regard to the matter which is giving the Bishops concern at the present time, and the British Executive may be expected to strongly press for the loyal advance of this principle. We have not in any way committed the American Executive. The supreme necessity is unquestionably to avoid any rupture at this stage, which would be disastrous. I quite recognise that there is a large issue ahead of us, and one for which it will take much statesmanship to find a solution.⁴⁶

The British Committee stepped up its efforts to convince the

North Americans, this time with George Robson taking the initiative. In addition to being vice-chairmen of Commission I, Robson was the Chairman of the Business Committee of the Central Advisory Committee of the Edinburgh Conference. On 2nd March 1909, he wrote to James Dennis, one of the key men of the subcommittee which was working on the atlas and the statistics of Commission I. The letter suggested that perhaps the North Americans might want to reconsider the matter "in order to meet the convictions of some of our Anglican brethren".⁴⁷ It was important, Robson insisted that the assurance the Anglican Church sought should be given before a crucial meeting between the Bishop of Southwark and the Archbishop of Canterbury :

I understand at first that all they wanted was a clear discrimination between the foreign mission work carried on among non-Christians and the work carried on among Roman catholics and the Oriental Churches (Assurance of his telegram was not enough) It has transpired that the position they take up is that only work among non-Christians (and not any efforts to convert from one form of Christianity to another) is to come within the purview of the Conference, whether statistically or otherwise. Of course the "Statement of Aims and Methods" indicates that it is work among non-Christians which the Conference meets to consider; and both on the Continent and in Britain we desired from the first that the statistics should be prepared on this principle...⁴⁸

Apparently the difficulty over the Anglican Bishops was resolved on March 1st. In a further letter to Mott concerning the decision of the Bishop of Birmingham, Oldham said: "You will see that the immediate difficulty is surmounted, and I believe that this is a very

real and striking answer to prayer". However he repeated his belief that the British Committee would continue to take "a very strong line in the matter". He continued to fear that the Anglican Church may decide to boycott the Conference:

...a complete rupture such as is threatened, would be disastrous. If the leading men in the Church of England were to withdraw, the whole attitude of the Press and of the general public in this country towards the Conference would be altered. The blow would be a very serious one indeed...⁴⁹

Oldham now also provided Mott with information that doubtless would place more pressure on the North Americans, namely that the Germans "will take the same view as the British Executive Committee".⁵⁰

As time went by, Oldham was becoming more conscious that though he was winning the battle with the Anglican Church, there were still major obstacles to remove. The main one was obviously that the North Americans were still resisting the idea of acquiescing in the Anglican view regarding the information on Latin America to be provided to the Conference. Significantly, Mott still did not realise the seriousness of the situation, as his letter to Oldham of the 3rd March 1909, showed: "I appreciate the seriousness of the situation, but with you I do not despair our being able to meet it after we have had time to go into matters thoroughly".⁵¹ Ten days later, Oldham wrote to him that as far as the Church of England was concerned the die was cast:

The issue about which I have been writing to you has become

clearer. The Central Advisory Committee met yesterday at York and gave careful consideration to the question. The only terms on which the Church of England will co-operate in the Conference are, that the statistics and all official publications should conform entirely to the principle of the Conference, i.e. must relate only to work among non-Christians. Further, they ask for this assurance within a month as they wished to withdraw, if they have to do so, before people's minds are puzzled.⁵²

Oldham's continual reference to the disastrous consequences of a possible withdraw of the Anglicans reveals to some extent the fact that the North Americans had no other choice than to act in accordance to the Anglican, which by then, had become the British line. Evidence of this was the decision of the vice-chairman of the Commission on Education, Professor Saddler, to act "with the Bishop of Birmingham and the Bishop of Southwark", not because he agreed with their view, but because of the national importance of the Anglican Church: "he feels that a gathering in which the national Church of England does not cooperate is so little representative of religious life in this country that he does not feel inclined to take part in it".⁵³

Furthermore Oldham wanted now to dispel any doubt with regard to the position of the other British commissioners. The time had come to take sides in the matter. That for him was now quite clear. This time it was Oldham, and not an Anglo-Catholic, who quoted a Roman Catholic source as an authority. He had found Krose, a Roman Catholic authority on statistics of missions, endorsed the view that the

statistics should be limited "to work among non-Christians". Oldham saw no trouble in accepting this as a reasonable view for the British to take.⁵⁴ In his view it was inconsistent to exclude Protestant work in European Catholic countries, as the Subcommittee had agreed, while insisting on the inclusion of Latin America: "If you admit work among the Roman catholics in South America why should we exclude such work in papal Europe?" Oldham made it clear that his argument was grounded on practical purposes and that he was not questioning "the legitimacy of the work of the American societies among the neglected populations of South America". He went on

My personal view is that the difficulty created by the leaders of the Church of England is driving us to adopt a really logical position with regard to Statistical Reports - one for which the Germans have always contended. I quite recognise the difficult position in which this places the American Societies who in these Returns will receive no recognition of valuable work done.⁵⁵

Oldham was also concerned over the statistical that James Dennis had done in his Centennial Survey of 1902, work which Oldham felt was lacking in guiding principles.⁵⁶ This was the first time, that a British cleric had raised the matter of Dennis's previous statistical work. Many Anglicans feared no doubt feared that Dennis, Beach, and Fahs would follow the principles that had guided their previous work on statistics, especially as Harlam P. Beach, had expressly distanced himself in his Geography and Atlas of Protestant Missions(1905) from the European view regarding Protestant work

among other Christian communions.

Dennis and Beach, however, realised that they could not begin to realise that they could not have their way this time. A letter of the 12th March 1909 from Dennis to George Robson is interesting for its admission that they had no idea of how important the matter of the statistics were for the Anglican Church: "We were none of us aware, I think, of the full significance of the attitude taken in Great Britain with reference to the scope of the statistical tables, and the extent of the restrictions placed upon the statistical Committee were not fully understood here".

Dennis' letter also convey two additional points. Firstly, the issue was as important for North American Protestants as it was for the Anglican circles in Great Britain. "Whatever may be our private opinion", said Dennis, "and whatever embarrassments may attend this decision, we are convinced that it is our duty to act in accordance with it". Secondly, the letter indicated that the whole of the statistics in the United States was not simply a matter of individual attitudes: "The Statistical Committee has proceeded thus far with its work with the support of the American Executive Committee, and the American section of Commission Number I.⁵⁷

Arthur J. Brown, chairman of the "American Business Committee" and member of the Business Committee of the Edinburgh Conference, officially communicated this decision to Oldham in a letter of the 13th March 1909. This letter also reflected the division that

the matter had caused within the North American section of the Conference. It now seemed clear, Brown said, "that only work among non-Christians and not any efforts to convert from one form of Christianity to another is to come within the purview of the Conference whether statistical or otherwise". He had cabled the following message the day before: "New York Members Executive and Statistical Committee personally willing to conform to judgment of British Executive on Statistics". Brown claimed finally that they were not taking up any obstructive position.⁵⁸ Oldham wrote right away to Mott expressing his joy for such a decision, saying that this was "another indication of God's goodness of His great purpose for the Conference."⁵⁹

For the moment the major problem was solved. However Mott had not yet been learned of this, because he was on a trip to Russia. This explains the content of his letter sent to Oldham sent the same day that Oldham had written to him expressing his joy over the North Americans' decision.

On the 15th of March Mott expressed to Oldham his concern for the course that events were taking. For him, as for his colleagues in North America, it had now become clear that the Church of England was not prepared to surrender its view on South America. In this letter to Oldham, Mott pinned his hopes on Oldham's ability to settle the matter on a visit to North America that, he had organised, for this purpose before he received Brown's letter. Not knowing that his

people had decided to work in line with the concern of the Church of England, Mott advised Oldham how he should approach the people in North America.

This letter is very revealing .The tone of the letter could easily have beenⁿ taken amiss by Oldham for many reasons. It was drafted in a way that seemed insensitive to both the anguish and the statesmanship that Oldham had shown all along in this matter. This can be seen in phrases like "take the question up on its merits with great thoroughness with each important person concerned" or "hear with open mind the arguments of any of the American leaders who may differ from the Church of England leaders". Mott gave three pieces of advice to Oldham: firstly, to stress the seriousness of the situation if the Church of England withdrew from the Conference; secondly, to let North American leaders receive the impression that Oldham was "quite as solicitous about holding their co-operation as you are of the Church of England leaders"; thirdly, to avoid the impression that only the European point of view and not the North American, had been taken seriously. He went on: "if you approach the problem in this way I honestly believe that you will carry them. Otherwise there might be a defection which would be as serious from some points of view as the other". He agreed that the circumstances so required a united front on the part of the members of the Conference that he was willing to suspend "judgment entirely on the controversial questions and concentrate our forces in Edinburgh on the admittedly non-Christian

fields." One of the most interesting features of this letter, is that Mott identified himself with the North American on Latin America:

I hold as strong convictions as anyone with whom I have talked about the essential non-Christian character of whole sections of the nominally Roman Catholic parts of Latin America, but I deplore having our forces divided at this time of all times in front of the unparalleled opportunities of the Far East and Near East, Southern Asia, Africa, and the East Indies.⁶⁰

Mott was still leaving room for a possible "compromise" though he did not spell out what kind of compromise it would be.⁶¹ Yet Oldham's reply did not see the likelihood of compromise. He rather expressed his joy of having the Church of England support the Conference:

I do not know whether it is possible for you to fully realise what an extraordinarily new and great thing it is that the Church of England is co-operating in this Conference as a national Church. It has never done anything of the kind before, and I think this marks an important event in the religious history of this country.⁶²

Although the Church of England had decided to take part in the Conference, they had to see that their objections would be taken seriously. To meet this, Oldham suggested two essential points (1) Consideration of any reference to work among Roman Catholics or other Christians must be ruled out. (This has been already laid down in principle in the constitution of the Conference and thanks to the generous action of the American Executive Committee) (2) The principle that we ask no surrender of conscientious conviction from

those co-operating in the Conference must be loyally adhered to. If these were met, he saw not need to anticipate any difficulty from the High Church party. Bishop Montgomery had said to him, "Once the principle is secured, you will find us as easy to get on with as anyone. We shall make no objection if a Calvinist or Baptist is allowed to say what he likes." Nothing could be more friendly or cordial than the three Bishops to whom I have referred.⁶³

A week later, 24th March, 1909, Oldham sent another letter to Mott in which he intimated that the British Committee will, the next day, pass a motion that:

Having learned that a number of those who are taking part in the various Commissions had stated that they had given their consent to co-operate in the Conference on the understanding that its scope would be restricted to work among non-Christians, and that they would feel it necessary to withdraw from the Commissions if this principle should not be strictly adhered to in the Statistics published by Commission I, as well as in other departments of the work of the Conference, the British Executive consider it reasonable that the Statistics should be in accord with the fundamental principle on which the Conference has been organised...⁶⁴

At the end of March 1909 Oldham in New York experienced for himself the North Americans' strong commitment with regard to the issue on South America. Though he already knew of their willingness to act in compliance with the criteria of the British and of Continental Europe, he now learned of its consequences in more detail. In a letter to George Robson, on 9th April 1909, Oldham reported on his conversation with the North Americans. In Oldham's view they were

facing two main problems. On the one hand, there was "the fact that an immense amount of the work already done by Dr. Dennis and Dr. Beach will have to be done over again," and on the other hand, there was the problem of explaining of their decision to their respective constituencies. North Americans saw the solution of this latter problem by a change of the name of Commission I. They therefore asked Oldham to seek support in Britain for the change to: "Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World".⁶⁵ The background of this whole controversy lets us suppose that the rationale of this new name laid in the word "all". North Americans had always argued that the European view on non-Christian people was limited insofar as it was confined only to Asia and Africa; meanwhile they were convinced that the feature of non-Christian peoples was also present in nominal Christians in South American countries. Hence the importance of that word "all".

Aware of the fact that North Americans had been the main casualty in the whole conflict, Oldham was in principle sympathetic to granting them that change. "As they have conceded so much to us" Oldham wrote to Robson, "I assured them that we would not make any difficulty on this score".⁶⁶ Further Oldham assured Mott that "the meetings with the American Executive were of a delightful character," and that they had "unanimously agreed to accept the British position regarding statistics". He believed this action of the North Americans "will prove a great object lesson and greatly increase the

spiritual power of the Conference".⁶⁷

Weeks later, Oldham informed Dennis about their agreement in changing the name of Commission I as the North Americans has suggested. This change, he added, had now been endorsed by the British members of Commission I and by the Bishops of Birmingham and Southwark. Oldham put it to Dennis thus:

The generous action of the American executive Committee and of the Sub-Committee on Statistics made a very deep impression on all present at the meeting. While no such sacrifice was demanded from those present at this meeting comparable to that which has been made by the American members of the Commission, the same conciliatory and generous spirit was manifested in America as was so strikingly shown in Britain. As I look back on this whole incident, it seems to me that we should have been very much the poorer without this exhibition of Christian charity...The proposal regarding the change of name of the Commission was approved...There is not the slightest doubt but that such approval [by the British executive Committee] will be given unanimously.⁶⁸

In this same letter, Oldham communicated to James Dennis the British position on those "doubtful points" which related to Protestant work in regions influenced either by Greek Orthodox or Roman Catholic Church. The main points were related to the work in Turkey, Persia and Egypt and South Eastern Europe, among Negroes in America and West Indies, to statistics of Roman Catholic and Greek Churches, to the definition of the terms "occupied" and "unoccupied" fields, and finally to South America. With regard to Turkey, Persia and Egypt, British commissioners agreed that the whole work carried out in these countries should be included in the statistics. However they

rejected the possibility of including information on converted people who "were drawn from the old Oriental Churches". It was said also that the same principle should hold for South and Eastern Europe.

The British Churches also took the position that the statistics must exclude "work among the negro population of North America, South America and the West Indies". This involved the work of British churches such as the United Free Church, of the Church of England, and of the Wesleyans in Jamaica.

The work of Roman Catholic and Greek Churches, on the other hand, should be shown , as far as they could be obtained, in separate tables.

With regard to the definition of the terms "occupied and "unoccupied", the British section of the Commission shared the view that "objection would be taken if a field were described as "unoccupied" if this implied "that the work of the Roman Catholic Church was not Christian work at all".

Finally the British commissioners position on the controversial South American question was unequivocally put thus:

It was agreed that Latin South America should be excluded from the Statistics, but that work among aboriginal tribes not yet Christian and among non-Christian immigrants should be included so far as possible. We imagine that this principle would lead to the inclusion of most of the work in British and Dutch Guiana, and the work of the South American Missionary Society[SAMS]. It would also be within the power of the American Sub-Committee to include any work of American Societies that was done primarily for pagan aboriginal tribes.⁶⁹

One could be tempted to think that the problems vanished once the Anglicans were satisfied with the assurance that the North Americans would give up their claim to include South America in the purview of the Conference. Yet, it does not seem so. The solution had various implications for the British Churches themselves. The Wesleyan, and Baptist Missionary Societies, together with the China Inland Mission, saw that the Edinburgh Conference would give an insufficient picture of their missionary work. A letter from Oldham to Mott on 21st May 1909, expressed the hope that "the trouble will blow over," but referred to the existence in England "of an atmosphere of suspicion between the Church and Nonconformity which makes things very difficult".⁷⁰

Oldham still saw the statistics as being the gravest difficulty to be overcome. He was not sure that the necessary explanatory notes to distinguish between work among non-Christians and among Christians of other communions would be enough to satisfy the people in Great Britain. Oldham knew that the High Anglicans were ready, if necessary, to raise their complaints in the Conference itself, if the final form of the information reported to the Conference did not satisfy them. The importance of this can be seen in Oldham's words to Mott: "I wish that it were in our power to do away with these".⁷¹ The problem was that in the numbers, graphics and maps it was almost impossible to distinguish the difference between the conceptions of

Europe and the United States, which, according to Oldham, lay at the heart of the problem:

I think you will probably find that, with reference to the report of your Commission, there is a distinctly British view which differs in certain points from the American, and it is an enormous advantage that there will be opportunity for full conference with you while you are in this country.⁷²

Oldham believed that dropping the Statistics section from the report of Commission I, they would avoid past tensions and the possible conflicts that this could cause in the Conference itself. Yet the North Americans had already granted much and now would not be ready to do this. Anyway this idea was not likely to be pressed by the British section. Indeed the work on the statistics appeared in the Conference's Statistical Atlas of Christian Missions, which was an integral part of the report of the North American dominated Commission I: "Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World".

4. Latin America at the Conference

Despite the agreement between the European and North American sections of the Conference, there was fear that the matter could come out in the Conference itself. For this reason Oldham spelled out, again and again, the importance of avoiding any improper reference to Latin America in the official reports. Much attention centred on the report of Commission I, "Carrying the Gospel to all Non-Christian People" and on especially the work of its sub-committee on

Statistics.

Did the reports reveal the agreement of Europeans with North Americans regarding Latin America? The brief answer to that is yes. The Report of Commission I and the Atlas managed to maintain a clear difference between work among non-Christian people and that carried out among Christians of other communions, especially in Latin America. Furthermore these commissions carefully avoided giving the impression that the missionary work of the Roman Catholic Church was not Christian at all.

The report of Commission I from the beginning defined as "being concerned solely with the non-Christian world".⁷³ As the Europeans had recommended, the section which dealt with the topic, "Unoccupied Sections of the World", refrained from describing areas where the Roman Catholic Church had a strong influence, as lands religiously unoccupied, or as "occupied" by Protestants missions.⁷⁴ The Protestant statistics were introduced with a note to the effect that they were confined "to missions to non-Christian peoples" and therefore that Roman Catholic countries had been excluded.⁷⁵ By including a section on the missionary work of Roman Catholic and Orthodox Greek Churches, the Conference gave.⁷⁶ The Report of Commission I contained some allusions that confirmed Oldham's doubts on the explanatory notes that the work on statistics should include. One of these indirect allusions appears in the introductory notes to the section, "Roman Catholic Missions Amongst Non-Christians".

Certain omissions also occur in order to make the statistics conform to the rules obtaining in the case of Protestant missions. Thus no evangelistic data of the important work of this Church in Latin America and the United States are given, except as they have to do with Indians; and in the Turkish Empire and Egypt the same reason has led to the exclusion of the figures relating to missions among the Oriental, Coptic, and Greek Churches.⁷⁷

Bearing in mind the controversial background of this commission, this note is of interest. Firstly, it made clear, as North Americans had always argued, that the Roman Catholic Church was also having work among Christians of other communions. Secondly, and contradictory to the North American claims, is that this note implied that Latin American countries were mostly already "occupied" by the Roman Catholic Church.

The second contradictory note of the atlas is the Christian presence depicted in the maps. Protestant missions had little interest in work among Indians, but rather focused on people who had been affected by the Roman Catholic Church. The concentration of Protestant missionaries and the investment of their resources was centred in regions that the Atlas described as being under the entire influence of the Roman Catholic Church. Most of the Protestant missionary personnel, for example, were concentrated in Mexico.

The section entitled "The Non-Christians of the Western Hemisphere", which dealt with the Indians and Orientals, described the first attempts to introduce Protestantism to Latin America in the missionary work of the French Huguenot John Boles who, as early as

1558, preached to the Indians in Santos.⁷⁸ No mention, however, is made of the valuable work of the Roman Catholic orders among the Indians. In the Report of Commission I references to Latin America were summarised thus:

The people to be evangelised. The Indians of South America constitute a large section of the population. Not including the mixed population which has in its veins a great deal of Indian blood, there are, it is estimated, over six millions of pure Indians widely distributed throughout the continent. Those of this number who are deep in heathen darkness come within the scope of this review. The only other non-Christians among the people of South America are 165.000 Hindu, Javanese, and Chinese coolies who have been brought over to work on the plantations.⁷⁹

Hugh Tucker and Robert Speer were among the only speakers at the Edinburgh Conference to refer to latin America. Tucker, a missionary of the American Bible Society in Brazil, in the discussion on Commission I, mentioned Indian work as a great task that must be part of "the Christian Church in this world-wide evangelization".⁸⁰ In the brief speech that Speer gave in the Conference on "Christ the Leader of the Missionary Work of the Church" we find a veiled reference:

Last of all, this leadership of Christ in the enterprise of Missions has its own deep meaning and significance for us here. The leadership of Christ involves the subjection of the whole world. No one can follow Him without following Him to the uttermost parts of the earth. No one can stand under his guidance without having his vision directed to this task. In so far as we follow the leadership of Christ. we shall follow him to all the races of men. His leadership prescribe the aim and the principle and the method of the missionary enterprise: the aim, to communicate a life which we have in Christ to all the world...⁸¹

This statement only becomes clear in light of the interest which the North Americans had shown in changing the name of Commission I, to include the word "all" as an essential part. Apart from these brief comments on Latin America, commissioners did not show any interest in this topic. Rather there were passages that confirmed the idea that definitely Latin America did not fit into the Conference.

5. Putting a good face on it

However painful the experience of the organization of the Edinburgh Conference had been for the North Americans, their attitude, once all the problems were sorted out, was to take full advantage of the virtues of the event. One of their last official references to the Edinburgh Conference before it took place was made in the Seventeenth Conference of Foreign Missions Boards of the United States and Canada, in January, 1910. There Arthur J. Brown issued this positive statement:

This will be the first time in history that the great leaders of all the Protestant communions will be assembled in proportionate representation for the common consideration of the problems of modern Christianity in relation to the non-Christian world. The gathering of such a remarkable body of Christian leaders will challenge the attention and respect of mankind and will undoubtedly give an enormous impetus to the cause.⁸²

At the eighteenth conference of the same body, in 1911, Brown

reported on the experience of being at Edinburgh. It is obvious that he had not been greatly and he dwelt more on the time before the event rather than on the significance of the assembly itself:

We make grateful mention of the delightful fellowships which have marked our three years of service. While the heaviest burden of responsibility naturally fell upon the British Executive Committee, within whose territory the Conference was held, there was enough to do on this side of the Ocean to make the life of the Committee a busy one. Many perplexing questions had to be met and some responsibilities assumed. But we labored together without a single dispute to disturb the perfect harmony of our relationships...⁸³

It is worth highlighting what Speer said after Edinburgh Conference in the North American missionary body, as he was probably the missionary leader who exerted most pressure to include Latin America in the purview of the Conference. For him there were two ways to assess the impact of the Conference: "One, as something past, the other as something which is still going". As something past he regarded the event "as one of the richest and best memories of our lives". But that, he said, "is gone". With regard to its future repercussions he noted three things. First, there was its influence on Protestant attitude toward the non-Christian religions. Secondly, there was its influence upon their view of the manner and method of the missionary enterprise. Thirdly, there was its influence on the Protestant approach to Christian fellowship and to Christian unity.⁸⁴ Speer went on to praise the Edinburgh Conference for having made no effort "to pass resolutions or to adopt policies; this left

us all free to discuss principles. When once we have found right principles; measures and methods will follow on in their own right place and time".⁸⁵

6. Previous works on statistics

It is clear that Europeans were well informed of the previous statistical work done by the North Americans working for the Edinburgh Conference. Harlam P Beach had published in 1901 his two volume A Geography and Atlas of Protestant Missions, and James Dennis had written in 1902 his detailed Centennial Survey of Foreign Missions. Both works had reflected the differences that marked Europeans and North Americans as far as foreign missions were concerned. Beach explicitly claimed that his work did not fit into what he called "the Continental school", insofar as he included "missionary operations among the Catholic populations of Latin America".⁸⁶ He consciously distanced himself from those missionary writers who avoided references to Protestant work in Roman Catholic countries. He endorse the opinion of those Protestants who believed that in Latin America "Christianity instead of fulfilling its mission of enlightening, converting and sanctifying the natives, was itself converted, Paganism was baptized, Christianity was paganized".⁸⁷ In short Latin America was "a land yet to be possessed".⁸⁸

Dennis took a similar line. He argued that work among Latin American Indians must be considered part of the foreign work of

North American missions, but also was clear that the same goes for missionary work among Orthodox and Roman Catholic constituencies:

It may be said that inasmuch as evangelical missions conducted by societies of Great Britain and the United States among Oriental Christian Churches in Western Asia and Egypt, and among Roman Catholics in Mexico, Central and South America, are counted as foreign by almost common consent, therefore Evangelical missions among the Roman Catholic or Greek Orthodox peoples of Europe should be so considered.⁸⁹

7. Exclusion of Latin America causes upset

It is possible that the role that North American churchmen, especially John R. Mott, played in the movement that emerged from the Edinburgh Conference, later caused the advocates of Protestant work in Latin America to be more inclined to see the bright side of the event, and to forget the exclusion of Latin America. Yet it is also true that the experience had been very distressing for them. There are indications that this experience was hard to accept for some of the delegates who later constituted the CCLA. This was so in the case of Robert Speer. His is a clear example of the awareness that North American missionary leaders were acquiring with regard to Latin America. The Church historian William Hogg had recorded that Speer was "keenly disturbed" by the exclusion of Latin America at Edinburgh.⁹⁰ John A Mackay, who was inspired by Speer to become missionary of the Free Church of Scotland in Peru, and later became one of Speer's closest friends, recalled that the conference had been a

real shock for him. "He was profoundly dissatisfied", Mackay said, "when the first great ecumenical gathering had refused to consider the validity of countries where the Roman Church dominated, as legitimate spheres of action for Protestant missionary activity".⁹¹

As a result of the Edinburgh Conference, Speer to visit Latin America, mainly in order to The outcome of this trip was his book: South American Problems(1916). Mackay described Speer's book as "was one of the most illuminating and incisive studies of the great area".⁹² Yet, judging by the content of his book, Speer travelled to Latin America mainly in order to verify for himself what he and most of the advocates of Protestantism in Latin America firmly held; that is, that the message of the Roman Catholic Church was not only flawed but had also lost its hold among its people. This view was bluntly rejected in the Edinburgh Conference.

Juan Orts Gonzalez was other example of how this conference affected the supporters of Protestant missions in latin America. Orts was Spanish ex-priest who had converted to Protestantism just one year before the Edinburgh Conference. He was Presbyterian missionary in Cuba for some years and the editor of the Spanish magazine and organ of the CCLA, La Nueva Democracia" since its beginning in 1920.

In 1936, when the CCLA was celebrating 20th anniversary of the Panama Congress, he and other CCLA workers were asked to write some historical notes on the origin of Protestantism in Latin America.

He took the occasion to recount what the Edinburgh Conference had meant for him: "When the Edinburgh Conference of 1910 excluded Latin-American countries from the purview of evangelical missionary activity, I was astounded and indignant, and said to myself, what is the use in becoming a Protestant?".⁹³

It was obvious that the Conference had been a blow for him, bearing in mind that he had recently devoted his life to denouncing the mistakes and vices of the Roman Catholic Church. His booklet, Roman Catholicism Capitulating Before Protestantism, written in 1909, reflected his disillusion with his former church. Therefore it is understandable when he complained that while he "was trying to declare the need for preaching the Gospel in Roman Catholic Spain and Latin America, the Protestant leaders were dis-authorizing my voice and putting me in the wrong". Like Speer, the Conference convinced him that he now had to work harder in order to demonstrate that the leaders in Edinburgh had been wrong: "My reply to that decision of the Edinburgh Conference was contained in the pamphlets, *Do Roman Catholics need the Gospel?*" and *"The best means to convert Roman Catholics"*.⁹⁴

Moved by their commitment to Latin America, a committee of delegates at the Edinburgh Conference denounced the decision of the Conference to exclude Latin America. This Committee consisted of Dr. H. K. Carroll, Chairman; the Rev. S.G. Inman, Secretary, and the Reverends J.W. Butler, William Wallace, H.C. Tucker, Alvaro Reis,

and G.I. Babcock.¹⁰⁸ The statement was, on the one hand, a recrimination for the way their interests were left out in the conference, and, on the other had, it was an explanation of why the North Americans were interested in working among countries under the influence of the Roman Catholic Church. First of all, they made it clear that they were not opposing the emphasis of the conference on non-Christian countries. On the contrary they expressed their enjoyment "over the success of that great gathering and the impulse it must give to the evangelisation of the non-Christian world". But they went on to say that "they felt constrained to say a word for those missions in countries nominally Christian that were not embraced in the scope of Edinburgh Conference". Secondly, they made it clear that their interest in those lands was not based on hostility to the Roman Catholic Church, but was based solely on the belief "that millions of people are practically without the Word of God and do not really know what the Gospel is..." According to the statement, they:

were "under obligation to give the Word of Life to those who are strangers to it; to tell those who have a form of godliness without the power; thereof that they may have both; to show those who have never received the Holy Ghost that the privilege is theirs for the asking; to rouse those who have a name to live and are dead to seek the abundant life-if these are obligation pertaining to discipleship anywhere, they are obligations to the populations above described.⁹⁵

Thirdly the statement asserted that work among Roman Catholic countries, had for long had been "a legitimate part of the foreign missionary Societies of the United States and Canada". Finally

they pointed out that the decision on Latin America was based on a narrow definition of Christian missions . It was a limited view that foreign missions "means missions to non-Christian peoples". Therefore "the American societies...did not admit that these missions to people nominally Christian are not properly foreign missions and ought not to be carried on....".⁹⁶

This aspect of different missiologies was again brought up in the speech that, on behalf of this committee, Speer made in the eighteenth annual meeting of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, in 1911. There he presented an extensive essay entitled The Case for Missions for Latin America. He pointed out, the difference between European and American views on foreign missions, and followed this up with a defence of Latin America as a legitimate field for Protestant missions. Speer admitted that North American missionary societies could not fit in a scheme which did not consider the work among nominally Christian countries as part of the definition of "foreign missions". However he was determined that the criteria on foreign missions that prevailed in Edinburgh should not affect the way that American missions should look on this issue. "In Edinburgh", said Speer, "we met with the European Societies on the basis of the European definition".⁹⁷ He described the North American difference in these terms:

Is not home mission work legitimate among all classes of people, whether nominal Christian or not, who are in any

religious need? Is not Christian work legitimate on behalf of any man whatever, no matter who or what he is, to win him to Christ or to a larger and truer life in Christ? To deny the propriety of trying to help in Christ's name and for Christ's service any man whom we can help is to deny the very spirit of Christ and to renounce the fundamental principle of the Gospel.⁹⁸

8. Latin America in the International Review of Missions

The Committee of Continuation continued to reflect the official line of the Edinburgh Conference through the its official organ The International Review of Missions. Its editor, J.H. Oldham, had no interest in changing direction in what the Conference had expressed with regard to Latin America, and from its first issue he made it clear that the scope of the Review "will be limited to work among non-Christian peoples".⁹⁹ However a year later Oldham stated that work among non-Christians in South America cannot be featured properly in the Review for "considerations of space and lack of sufficient information".¹⁰⁰ The Protestant work carried out in Latin America only appeared in the bibliographical references under the heading "America and the West Indies". The preparation for the Panama Congress, and the Congress itself in 1916, were almost completely ignored by the Review.

Oldham's book, The World and the Gospel, published months after the Panama Congress, showed that he was still not convinced about the value of Protestant work in Latin America. Though he mentioned people like Lord Bryce who advocated it on account of the

"ethical standards of these countries", Oldham stated emphatically that "there is no room to speak of the spiritual destitution of the great South American continent".¹⁰¹

While the commitment to keep the Review in accord with the Edinburgh Conference was indeed the main reason for its silence on Latin America, Oldham also wanted to give the Review an ecumenical character. From the beginning Oldham sought to include articles that relating to the mission work of the Roman Catholic Church. Roman Catholic scholars were free to raise their criticisms and doubts with regard to Protestant views on missions. In 1914, a Catholic writer contributed an article on missions from the Roman Catholic point of view. Though the writer expressed his intention "to promote better understanding between Protestants and Catholics", he could not avoid touching on the question that had led the Protestant Europeans to leave Latin America out of the Edinburgh Conference, saying;

A common charge against Roman Catholic Church missions is that they intrude into Protestant missions fields. Those who make this criticism entirely forget that in all the Roman Catholic countries of Europe and America, Protestant missionaries carry on systematic propaganda among Roman Catholics...Dr.Swermer in his otherwise very instructive book, The Unoccupied Mission Fields of Africa and Asia, should almost wholly ignore Roman Catholic Missions... On the other hand it ought to be regarded, as matter of course that, so long as there are heathen in other parts of the area occupied by a mission to whom missionaries can devote their labours, they will not enter a district which has already been completely, or largely, occupied by another Christian body.¹⁰²

Oldham also showed sympathy for the criticisms of the

Orthodox Churches towards those North American Protestants who saw them as a field for mission. Leaders of the Orthodox Churches kept complaining of "sheep stealing" by some Protestant societies. W.A. Visser Hooft referred to the proselytising work of some western churches as follows:

So many troubles and sufferings are caused by other Christians and great hatred and enmity is aroused, with such insignificant results, by this tendency of some to proselytize and entice the followers of other Christian confessions... The Orthodox churches have been deeply hurt by the "sheep-stealing" in which a number of Western churches and missions were engaged. To treat Orthodox Christians as pagans who should be converted seemed to the eastern churches as a denial of Christian solidarity...¹⁰³

9. Paralysis of the Committee of Continuation

The effects of World War I on the relationship of the United States and Latin America has been mentioned elsewhere. Here, the argument will be confined to the influence of the War on the Panama Congress.

The consequences of the conflict were so grave for European countries that all the energy of the churches was directed towards solving the problems it had created. There was no time for Christian churches such as German Lutherans and English Anglicans, who had influenced the decision against Latin America in Edinburgh, to give further thought to Latin American issues. Furthermore leading European Church leaders felt that their Christian testimony had lost credibility because of the War. This was something that North

American Protestants now exploited in their religious plans for Latin America.

J.H. Oldham was one of those outstanding representatives of European Protestant Christianity who recognized that the War was not only causing pain in Europe, but was also becoming an obstacle for missionary work abroad. He strongly questioned the traditional identification of the Western world with Christianity. Western materialism, in his view, had made "modern Christianity to depart from the mind of Christ in its surrender to the values of material things." In addition he interpreted the War as calling for the Church's recovery "of the emancipating and vitalizing truth that human life is of far greater worth than material things".¹⁰⁴ Oldham saw that the church had to rethink missionary work, and learn to express its message "in clear ringing deeds" rather than simply in send out preachers.¹⁰⁵ Hooft says that Oldham was clear that "after the war, a new beginning had to be made".¹⁰⁶

In Latin America, Protestant missionaries, also used the War to stress the need for a different kind of Christianity. The difference between them and Oldham was that the North American missionaries, far from feeling guilty over the War, almost argued that the War had shown the best Christianity to be found in America. North America had nothing to do with the War and yet was determined to stop the conflict. The War demanded from all nations "a triumphant Christianity as the bulwark of civilization itself".¹⁰⁷

The War had practically paralysed all the plans the Edinburgh Conference had made to implement its decisions through the Committee of Continuation. This in turn permitted the North Americans to concentrate on strengthening Protestant work in Latin America. Ironically while Oldham believed in a new beginning within the framework of the Edinburgh Conference, in Latin America Protestant missionaries were making a new start that to some extent represented a departure from that conference. The interruption that World War I brought to the Edinburgh plans also meant that Latin America was given more attention. Mott had to give up a series of conferences, that under the Committee of Continuation were to be held in The Levant in 1916. Beach saw this as a factor which made the Panama Congress "more effective than it otherwise might have been".¹⁰⁸

Hopkins had pointed out that the War facilitated the work of Mott in Latin America and the Philippines. That moment was seen as ideal "to stimulate the foreign work". It was ^{at} this time Mott sent Agustin Turner to work in Chile and Santon Turner to Manila.¹⁰⁹ During the War Mott focused a great deal of his attention on the religious needs of Latin America, and instructed the organizations under his direction and influence to avail themselves of this situation for the good of Latin America. One such organization was 'The Foreign Missions Conference of North America'; in 1914 Mott was serving on its Board Missionary Preparation and on the executive of the

Committee of Reference and Counsel. This committee was vital for the re-launching of the Protestant cause in Latin America. It was from within it that Robert Speer had worked to convince people that North America had a religious responsibility with regard to Latin America. They were clear that during the War they could not wait for any help from Europe towards Latin America. Further, some supporters of Protestant missions began to emphasize the opportunity that the United States extend its economic, as well as religious influence to the region. This can be seen in Beach's argument on the opportunities of the War:

If Europe can not help so North and South must work together. Post-bellum opportunities will doubtless be unique, and now is the time in which the Church and individual Christians should consider and prepare for them. If Europe's burdens, because of the costly and exhausting warfare, will then be too heavy to admit of aiding Latin America, Latins and North Americans should unite their forces and increase their efforts to make good the loss.¹¹⁰

10. Panama Congress as part of the Edinburgh process

Although the Edinburgh Conference excluded Latin America, the CCLA's leaders always acknowledged that their plans were connected with it. Speer could declare that greater attention had been drawn to missionary work and its urgency in Latin America by its omission at Edinburgh than by its possible inclusion.¹¹¹

In making this correlation three things stand out. First, those North Americans in Edinburgh who favored the strengthening of

Protestant work in Latin America felt that their programme had been confirmed. This was because they saw themselves as part of God's inspired people, called to take advantage of what they considered "the propitious time" for Latin America. Secondly, the link became necessary because the Edinburgh Conference, despite its decision concerning Latin America had fascinated the Protestant missionary world, and nobody wanted to be excluded from its influence. Thirdly, and probably most important, Mott had become the leader of the process that came out of it. Mott was not only a close friend of people like Robert Speer, but he himself shared the concern of Speer regarding Latin America. Though it is clear that the Committee of Continuation were prepared to reconsider the claims for Latin America, Mott made the CCLA leaders feel that they were part of its work. This is why, far from criticising the Edinburgh Conference, CCLA leaders saw their work as an offspring of the Conference. This is also why some critics of the Edinburgh Conference also became critics of the Panama Congress. For example, John Fox, saw "a genetic connection" between the two.¹¹²

Nor was Fox wrong. CCLA people believed not only that the Panama Congress was expected to do for Latin America what Edinburgh had done for the non-Christian world, but also that the experience of Edinburgh was giving "confidence and courage" to the work in Latin America.¹¹³

As the CCLA was consolidating its work in the region, the

treatment of Latin America at the Edinburgh Conference was forgotten. Even more, at times they spoke as if the decision to exclude Latin America had been right. In the Montevideo Conference in 1925 for instance, they referred to the emphasis on the non-Christian world in Edinburgh as "the most important reason" for there being "an essential difference in the character of the problems to be dealt with in Latin America".¹¹⁴ Webster Browning at that time believed that the reasons given for the exclusion of Latin America were "logical and understandable".¹¹⁵

The "germinal incident", to use Speer's words, that, in Edinburgh, prompted reconsideration of Protestant work in Latin America at Edinburgh, despite the official hostility of Conference leaders was the presence as delegates of missionaries working in those countries. Their missionary Boards had chosen their representatives not only from those working in non-Christian fields.¹¹⁶ These people seeing that their work was not going to receive any benefit from the conference, created, virtually, a parallel conference in which the needs and problems of their fields were discussed in private. Their first meeting aroused such interest that they decided to have a second, but this time, inviting a "number of secretaries of the mission Boards who were responsible for work in Latin America. Speer later recalled the spirit of these meetings in Edinburgh as follows:

Perhaps there are a few here this evening who were present at the meeting on Princes Street in Edinburgh six years ago at which the representatives from the great evangelical

churches in Latin America, and a number of the members of our Missions in Latin America, came together and considered what might be done in the interest of the work that lay nearest to their hearts and deepest in their sense of duty. If there any of you who were there at that meeting, you will remember very well, the depth and earnestness of feeling that characterized that little group of men who felt that the service that was nearest and dearest to them was in danger of being passed by.¹¹⁷

Four things were, according to Speer, in the minds of these delegates: (1) They were greatly concerned with the apparent indifference of great masses of their fellows to what they felt to be the deep spiritual rights of the Latin American nations. They were anxious that these claims should be laid upon the hearts of the home constituency in a more effective way. (2) They were deeply impressed with the need for an adequate, popular and helpful literature for the Portuguese and Spanish evangelical churches. (3) They were convinced that now was the time when parts of these great lands, sparsely settled but some day to be densely settled, now comparatively unoccupied by the church, should be arranged for by such distribution of responsibility among the churches, as would assure adequate provision and care. And, (4) they were convinced that these great needs could only be met as some gathering might be held which would do for the Latin American people what the Edinburgh Conference was seeking to do for all the mission work among the great non-Christian peoples.¹¹⁸

It was at this second session that these delegates decided that a similar conference should take place to study the problems that Latin

America posed for Protestant work. "A conference to do for all its mission interests what the Edinburgh Conference was doing in such a splendid way for the mission enterprise in other parts of the world".¹¹⁹ Browning says that those delegates "met each day and began to plan for a special gathering".¹²⁰ It seems that this hope became the ingredient which made the Conference more palatable to those concerned about Latin America. This is the background of the claim by CCLA leaders that "the representatives of Latin American missions agreed to their omission at the Edinburgh Conference, reserving at the same time the privilege of identifying themselves at some future time with a movement for a Latin-American conference".¹²¹

The possibility of an event of the stature of the Edinburgh Conference was understood by the CCLA leaders to have come to fruition in the Panama Congress in 1916. It was a commitment made not only on behalf of North American Churches but also of those in Great Britain who also wanted to receive support for their work in Latin America.

Since its inception, the Panama Congress was depicted as the symbol of a transition towards a new era of Christianity in Latin America. The basis of the promise was that the interests of these countries "should not be neglected".¹²² So we might gather that the shock of being overlooked at Edinburgh was not so traumatic as it might appear. Rather the Edinburgh Conference created the conditions out of which Panama grew.

In the view of the CCLA leaders the Edinburgh Conference had been, as far as missionary work was concerned, a great advance. Yet they could not understand why Latin America could not have benefited from that experience. Among the achievements of the Edinburgh Conference that they wanted to bring to Latin America, the CCLA leaders gave particular emphasis to cooperation and unity. Indeed

the organisers of the Panama Congress did not hesitate to view it as part of the ecumenical movement that had marked the missionary movement so far. As George Robson had done with the Edinburgh Conferences, Mott spoke of the Panama Congress as part of the series of events since the ecumenical conference of 1854 on the occasion of the visit of Alexander Duff to the United States.¹²³

11. The desire for a "Science" of Missions

The end of the last and beginning of this century witnessed, as never before, an increasing and euphoric interest in the work of Protestant missionary societies. The study and the challenges that modern times posed, and not just the simple need of sending staff abroad, became the new element.

The Edinburgh Conference had taken advantage of the expertise of those who were applying new techniques to the work of missions. The use of maps, charts, questionnaires, statistics was seen virtually as the beginning of a "science of missions". Missionary leaders believed

that it was time to analyze and assess the impact of missions, and to discuss means to make them more effective. In short this expression "science" was, in essence, nothing other than the wish to take seriously the work of Christian missions.

The Edinburgh Conference was presented as the best expression of the development that missionary work had reached. When the official handbook of the Edinburgh Conference advertised the sale of the documents of the Conference, it referred to them as material that "will form a standard work on the science of missions".¹²⁴ The Committee of Continuation was committed to furthering this development, and the building up of a "science of missions" was the primary purpose of its organ, The International Review of Missions, as J.H. Oldham, its editor, defined it.¹²⁵

In Edinburgh The Commission of "The Home Base and Missions", contained a section called a section called "The science of missionary societies". It argued that the Edinburgh Conference, unlike any other past event, had affected missionary work not only abroad but at home as well. The report put this contrast thus:

The lack of such a science is wasteful in extreme, since it compels all societies to conduct experiments by themselves and to learn by their own successes and mistakes alone. There is no general organised plan by which the failures and successes of one Society may become the common property of all, nor is there a place in which the missionary organization of Christendom with any regularity or precision can discuss by their representatives questions that are of general interest at all. This Edinburgh Conference is the first attempt at a systematic and careful study of missionary problems of the

world, including those that bear upon the work abroad and the operations of the societies at home.¹²⁶

12. Panama Congress was "scientific"

In Panama, delegates praised the contribution of the Edinburgh Conference to the "science" of missions. The thoroughness of the reports was seen as an indication that the event was playing "a most important part in the furtherance of a new science of missions".¹²⁷ In this regard Edinburgh was described as an epoch-making conference, a watershed in the history of missions:

The World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910 marked a still greater advance in missionary strategy and science. Those who had been present at the previous Ecumenical Conference were impressed by the difference between the basis and the organization of the gatherings. At New York City the thinking of the Conference was guided by individual opinions expressed by chosen speakers. At Edinburgh commission reports, prepared with the utmost care, formed the basis of all the discussions. Each commission had some two years for the preparation of its report. No such authoritative investigation of missionary problem had ever been undertaken before.¹²⁸

The conferences that the Committee of Continuation of the Edinburgh Conference held in Asia in 1912 and 1913 confirmed the beginning of a new era in the propagation of Christianity.

The organisers of the Panama Congress were well informed of what the Committee of Continuation was doing. Yet those who wanted to see Latin America as part of the new strategy of missions feared that their situation could not fitted into the "scientific" concern

that prevailed in Edinburgh. This was serious concern, because the advocates of the Protestant evangelization of Latin America, under the impulse of the CCLA, always made it clear that they were not simply improvisers who only wanted to convert people to Protestant churches. Therefore they insisted that they were in line with the Edinburgh Conference:

It was inevitable that the scientific movement with respect to missions among non-Christians, which was given so great an impetus at Edinburgh would, sooner or later, become cooperative with respect to missions in Latin America.¹²⁹

The CCLA leaders' insistence that the Panama Congress was not on the fringe of the latest developments in the study of missions became a permanent issue throughout the whole event. They believed that the best of Edinburgh represented was at Panama. Beach gives us that insight when he, with the benefit of hindsight, states that:

Indeed, the Congress was permeated with the Zeitgeist and tingled with the Geistesdrang of this epochal period in the evolution of the missionary enterprise; it was the rich heir of recent advances in the science of missions and burned with the ardor which the impelling spirit of unity and cooperation is imparting in these latter days.¹³⁰

To be scientific was an imperative of the epoch, and the Panama Congress could was no exception. Furthermore the CCLA leaders believed that this scientific mood was also present in Latin America. The failures of traditional religion in religion was seen as symptomatic of the need for the revision of Christianity. This latter was largely identified with a more scientific view of Christianity.

Inman discerned in Latin America an interest in studying religion in a more serious way. The CCLA leaders were certain that the Panama Congress was going to meet that expectation. This belief was strengthened at the annual meeting of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America in 1916, when Inman reported that a high official in the University of Chile in the Panamerican Scientific Congress, called by the Pan American Union in 1916, presented a resolution urging the governments to create chairs "in order to study in a scientific way the subject of religion, and especially Christianity as it has been developed in the North American continent".¹³¹ At the same Conference, Dr. Thornton B. Penfield, of the Committee on Arrangements for Panama, said that the sort of work that the eight commissions were doing would put the event on a par with the Edinburgh Conference:

I may say on behalf of these commissions and the Committee of Arrangements, that we have no reason to be ashamed to place these reports in their final form alongside of those eight little red volumes with which some of us are so familiar, of the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh. These eight reports will appear in three small volumes.¹³²

John R. Mott who was also attended that meeting, confirmed these impressions when he said that "...I know of no other missionary Conference where we have a stronger combination of recognized leaders and Christian statesmen".¹³³ At Panama in his response to the address of welcome from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the

Republic, Mott reiterated that the Congress would follow the lines of the scientific study of Christianity:

The time has come for us to master our facts as to the social and moral and religious conditions of these nations, as has not heretofore been accomplished. We see large promise that this may be realized. The splendid work done on those eight commission reports, and the debates that are coming in this room, morning after morning, will increase this sense of promise that there will issue from Panama Congress a more scientific dealing with the facts, not theories or visions merely, desirable as these are, on this Western Hemisphere.¹³⁴

At the end of the Congress the CCLA leaders were convinced that the discussions and reports constituted, as Inman stated, "the most exhaustive study of the social, educational and spiritual conditions of Latin America ever made".¹³⁵ The satisfaction with the way Latin America was addressed in Panama was such that the Congress's influence continued to be felt in the later events called by the CCLA in Montevideo(1925) and in Havana(1929). In Montevideo, for instance, the commission which worked on unoccupied fields acknowledged their dependence on the data of the Report on Survey and Occupation presented in the Panama Congress. It was said that this report remained "unsuperseded and unrivalled" and was described as:

The first serious and scientific attempt of Christian leaders to evaluate, through a comprehensive collation of facts, the present claims of the Hispanic American democracies to the unrealised contribution which the Christian religion has yet to make to the neo-Latin civilization.¹³⁶

13. Panama Congress better than Edinburgh

In stressing the superiority of the Panama Congress, CCLA leaders could not avoid criticising the Edinburgh Conference. Yet their criticisms were directed to the exclusion of Latin America. This issue, especially after the Panama experience, had been left behind. Rather the organisers of the Panama Congress were convinced that their Congress was more scientific than that of Edinburgh. Their criticism touched on what the experts had praised most: "the new science of missions". For they knew that it was in the name of a new "science of missions" that Latin American was left out. This mood was expressed by Harlam P. Beach. Though he acknowledged that Edinburgh had been a great Protestant Christian Conference, he felt that in many points Panama had been superior. First, the reports were better prepared. Every commission had spent months investigating their subjects, and their final reports had passed through a great deal of discussion. Once the reports were written page, proofs were sent to the fields for final criticism there. In this respect Beach maintained that "Panama outranked Edinburgh" for "when the commissions reported on the Congress platform, the material presented was as nearly in its final form...and consequently there was little left to be criticised at any similar gathering in any country".¹³⁷

Second, the personnel of the Panama Congress "was both notable and unique". Panama had more experienced missionaries and more prominent speakers, in contrast with Edinburgh where specialists dominated the discussions: "The World Conference of 1910

had attracted to the Scotch Athens experts on missions".¹³⁸

Third, the homogeneity of the delegations and of the issues to be discussed facilitated the work in Panama. The cosmopolitanism that prevailed in Edinburgh turned out to be another of its drawbacks, for "conference members came together in groups and by racial affiliations rather than through a bond of identical tasks and similar experiences".¹³⁹

Fourth, the Edinburgh Conference had an overwhelming majority of Western delegates, especially missionaries, and very few natives of the non-Christian countries. What is more, Beach perceived that "with rare exceptions these delegates were silent spectators in which they seemed to have little part".¹⁴⁰ All showed that the so-called scientific character of Edinburgh was not as it was supposed:

The joint result of so ecumenical a gathering was inevitably somewhat confusing; and its contribution to the science of Missions was that of a vast preliminary collection and coordination of data rather than a specific study of distinct problems, isolated from related facts.¹⁴¹

Indeed the absence of representatives of the countries for which the Edinburgh Conference was convened, had been a major concern for Mott. His biographer, Hopkins, has pointed out that the inclusion of at least one Oriental in each delegation was done on Mott's insistence.¹⁴²

The ethnic homogeneity of the delegations at Panama facilitated the application of methods and theories of mission work. In Panama

the commission on Cooperation and Unity saw that in Latin America the task that they wanted to push had more possibilities of success:

The Boards and Societies at work in Latin America are not so numerous or so widespread as to bases, as were those interested in Edinburgh. The areas within which cooperation might be attempted are not so great as in the case of the non-Christian world. Inter-Board experience in cooperative matters at home and abroad is much richer and more varied than in 1910.¹⁴³

Beach was still more specific in saying that the homogeneity of problems and workers, and the absence of different religions such as Buddhism, Mahomedanism and Confucianism, were propitious conditions for "a scientific determination of certain forms of missionary theory and method." In a word, said Beach:

if the two largest missionary conferences in recent years are compared, Edinburgh was general, cosmopolitan, unusually varied in viewpoint, and extensive in scope; while Panama was specialized, homogeneous, united and uniform in its objectives and intensive in its investigations and discussions, as was natural when all the delegates represented a single great division of the world.¹⁴⁴

Conclusion

It is unquestionable that the Edinburgh Conference exercised a profound influence on the Protestant expansion in Latin America. The discord over Latin America before Edinburgh eventually became an experience that confirmed the North American missions in their commitment to expand their influence in these countries. CCLA leaders were keen to bring the best of Edinburgh to help to make

Panama what it became, a turning point in the history of Protestantism in Latin America.

The pressure on North America over the Latin American question which stirred in the background at Edinburgh was still maintained in Europe after the Edinburgh Conference. Oldham stuck strictly to the spirit of the Conference to such an extent that for some years Latin America did not appear in the International Review of Missions. However the Latin American question at Edinburgh made North Americans realise how different they were in their missionary approach from that of the Europeans, especially the British. North Americans did not know the seriousness with which the High Anglicans regarded their relationship with the Roman Catholic Church. Finally it is interesting to note that J.R. Mott emerge^d as one of the main leaders of ecumenical movement that the Edinburgh Conference prompted.